

Hildebrandts Are Back! • 'Rebel Assault II' • 'Shadows' Preview

STAR WARS GALAXY

MAGAZINE

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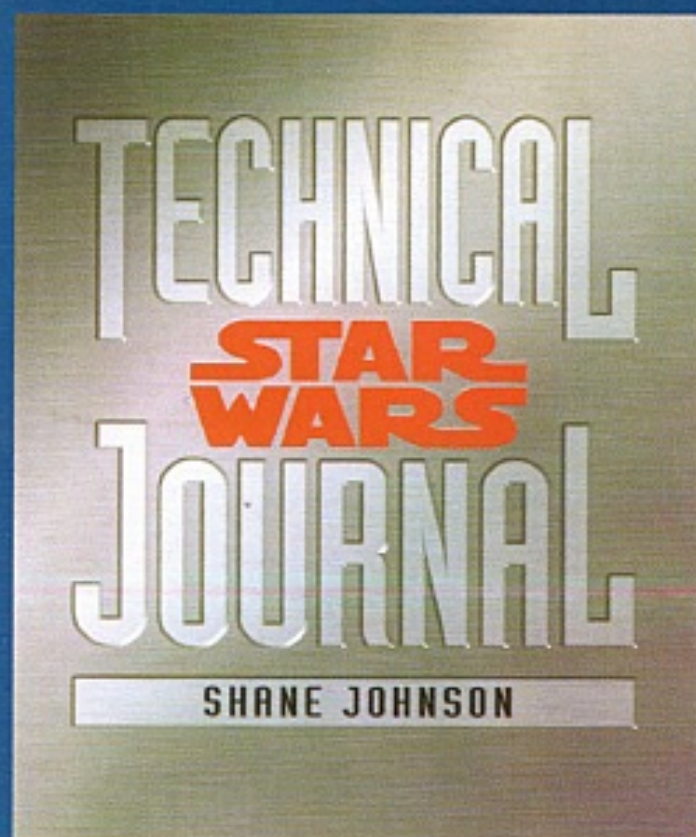


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STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE

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Greg and Tim Hildebrandt

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► The best word to describe the Brothers Hildebrandt, as twin siblings Greg and Tim had become known when I first met them in 1978, is *extraordinary*. That was the impression I already had 17 years ago when I climbed up to the barn loft that then served as their paint-splattered, prop-strewn studio (the artists have since moved into a suburban New Jersey office building, but the studio remains, thankfully, paint-splattered and prop-strewn), having familiarized myself with their distinct artwork beforehand. The now-famous *STAR WARS* poster was just one of dozens of fantasy, sword and sorcery, science fiction and other amazing visions that had brought them renown.

The coloring, lighting and perspective of the Hildebrandts' art are remarkable, but seeing first-hand how they work in tandem, simultaneously on the same paintings, was, well, extraordinary. That word also aptly fit their personalities and enthusiasm. They seemed to approach art—and life—as if it were a piñata, filled with visual goodies, and they were bound to smash it open and present everything on canvas.

After years of interpreting other people's fantastic stories, the brothers became ob-

essed in the early '80s with creating an epic one of their own. But when *Urshurak* finally did not make the giant leap from book to movie, the effort left them spent. Eventually they split up, ending a lifelong partnership and going their separate personal and artistic ways (read the details, p. 22).

It was about a year ago that *SWG*M contacted the Hildebrandts to see if they'd be interested in reentering the *STAR WARS* universe. They'd recently gotten back together and begun reasserting themselves as a dual creative force. Though a bit grayer and a tad tamer than in '78, they still had the same wide-eyed enthusiasm when we met



again last winter. And when our discussions went beyond the cover of this magazine and into a deal to create a *Shadows of the Empire* card set, the brothers were back.

Nowhere was that more evident than at last summer's 26th annual San Diego Comic Convention. As guest stars of *STAR WARS* Day—a con event sponsored by Topps, Dark Horse Comics, Bantam and Del Rey Books—Greg and Tim signed thousands of autographs. Fans queued up with *Lord of the Rings* calendars, *Clash of the Titans* posters and Marvel Masterpieces cards and *STAR WARS* stuff, but it was obvious that they remain heavily associated with *STAR WARS*. That identity was reinforced when they accepted an Ink Pot Award, for lifetime achievement, at the con (above, with Tim at left) and during a subsequent trip to Skywalker Ranch.

The Hildebrandts are doing 100 brand-new paintings for Topps' *Shadows* card set. Their creative heads are spinning with ways to illustrate the story of intrigue, espionage and other dealings by Imperials and Rebels, events that take place between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. In this issue's article on the brothers, you'll find an exclusive peek at Xizor (Shee-zor), the malevolent crime boss whose dastardly plot fuels *Shadows*. And until the card set is released next summer, *SWG*M will reveal more details, and Hildebrandts art, about *Shadows*. The results will be... *extraordinary*.

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◆ It was great to see an excerpt (Luke and Vader's lightsaber duel) from my *Empire* radio/CD scripts book in Issue #4. Thanks, SWGM—but I thought it might be of interest to fans unfamiliar with the show to know Luke's lines just prior—from the previous episode. Luke's conquered his fear and driven Vader back sword-to-sword. Vader's been taunting Luke to release his anger. Luke stalks him deeper into Cloud City, pausing to call implacably, "You wait down there, in the shadows! I'll

COMMUNIQUE

come down. Are you just angry—or are you afraid, too. I'm gonna find you... and we'll see..." My take was, Luke's insight and need to know drove much of what happened thereafter. As for the *Jedi* adaptation, chances are looking good for a final audio series to complete the trilogy. I've got more than a decade

of my own notes and fans' queries waiting to rev; keep your fingers crossed. **BRIAN DALEY**, Arnold, MD

◆ Being an on-and-off fan of Marvel's old *Star Wars* comic books, I was surprised and happy to see the RPG character of Lumiya/Shira Brie in SWGM #3. The *Star Wars* Marvel comics often get dumped on for being too campy, but I just wanted some people to know that Lumiya was an old Marvel character. She was one of Marvel's best characters, as Brie and Lumiya. Just like to give credit where credit is due. **JAMES MCFADDEN**, Auburn, MA

JMMCFADDEN@hccad.holy-cross.edu

◆ I received Issue #3 of SWGM as a "joke" gift from my husband for our anniversary. It's the first I'd heard of the magazine, and I loved it! I've loved *Star Wars* and everything that's gone with it since the movie first came out... when I was six; when *Empire* came to our theaters, I sat through it twice in one sitting. I had already read Barbara Hambly's

Children of the Jedi [excerpted in Issue #3] and found it one of the best sequels, and I've read all of them. Reading [elsewhere in the issue] about all the toys for the movies [Galactic Bazaar], I wish I'd collected more of them when they first came out; my brother still refuses to give me his. I've started over with the *Micro Machines*. Anyway, thanks for the enjoyable magazine. **KRISTER ROWEN FLISKE**, Seabrook, TX

◆ Envelope art by PERCY HAMBLBY San Antonio, TX



◆ Envelope art by GINA GOAD Toledo, OH

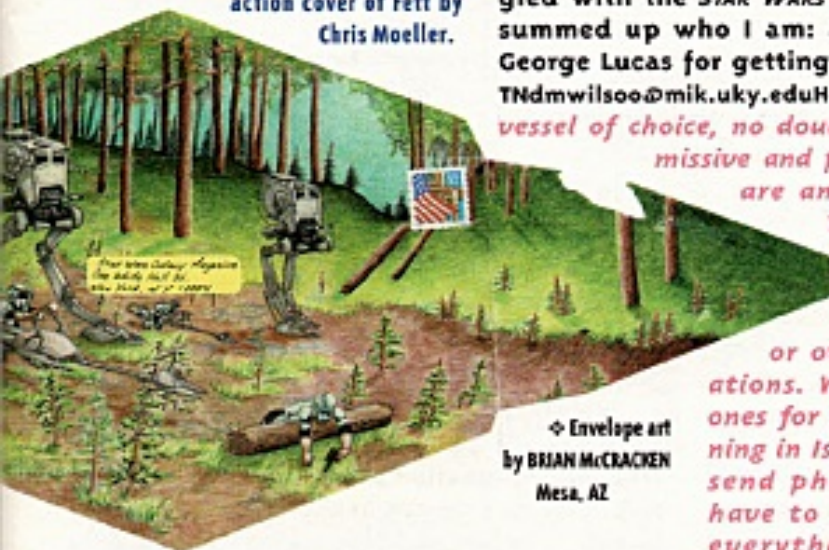
◆ I recently bought the original radio drama, on audio cassettes, of *Star Wars: A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back* at my local bookstore. National Public Radio ran those radio plays in the early '80s. They have much more dialogue than the original films, and with the special effects and music scores added, you can let your imagination run wild. I thoroughly enjoy them. Nevertheless, I just learned that NPR never made a radio drama of *Return of the Jedi*. This puzzles me, considering the success of the first two, which helped me understand the characters more and added scenes that I wish the movies would have carried. Could you please tell me why NPR never ran *Jedi*? **MARK SHAMERFINKSBURG**, MD **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Radio plays, successful or not, are rare these days. Yet, as you'll read in the letter above, from Brian Daley, the author of the two *Star Wars* NPR dramatizations, there may be hope yet that *Jedi* will eventually hit the airwaves.

◆ EVER SINCE I GOT ISSUE #1 OF YOUR MAGAZINE, MY TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWLEDGE OF *STAR WARS* STUFF IN GENERAL HAS GREATLY IMPROVED. I HAVE JUST READ ISSUE #4 AND LOVED IT. I JUST WANTED TO SAY "HAPPY B-DAY, TESB." **SCOTT SAVAGE** ENS SCOTT@aol.com

◆ In Issue #3 you featured Lumiya, a character for *Star Wars* roleplaying games. Since then I've been trying to find the basic rule book with no avail. **Brian Bytnar**, Raphine, VA **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Roleplaying games have become a popular and entertaining way to further enjoy the trilogy as gamers take on the roles of characters in action-packed adventures. You'll find another original RPG story in this issue. The major source of *Star Wars* roleplaying games, however, is West End Games, publisher of sourcebooks and other companions. Their books are sold in comics shops and other hobby retailers. Or you can contact the company directly: West End Games, Rd. 3, Box 2345, Honesdale, PA 18431.

♦ I'VE BEEN READING YOUR PUBLICATION SINCE ISSUE #1, AND IT'S THE GREATEST IN ALL THE GALAXY! IT ALWAYS HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERY STAR WARS READER. I HOPE TO SEE THIS MAGAZINE PUBLISHED WELL BEYOND THE NEXT STAR WARS TRILOGY. AMONG THE DIVERSE CHARACTERS IN THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE, MY FAVORITE ARE THE BOUNTY HUNTERS—BOBA FETT, BOSSK, IG-88, DENGAR, 4-LOM AND ZUCKUSS. TOO BAD THE MOVIES COULD NOT [EXPAND] ON THEM FURTHER. MAYBE WE'LL SEE BOBA FETT IN ONE OF THE PREQUEL MOVIES. ED B. SCHODDE, Pittsburgh

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for the raves, Ed. And as far as Boba and his fellow bounty hunters, there seems to be no letting up to their ongoing popularity. But you don't need to wait till '98 to see more of them. Indeed, this issue's all-new Dark Horse Comics mini adventure is the first of a four-parter about Boba. And our upcoming Issue #6 will be an All-Bounty Hunters Special—beginning with an in-your-face action cover of Fett by Chris Moeller.



♦ Envelope art
by BRIAN McCracken
Mesa, AZ

♦ I remember being sick in a hospital, and a small patient there had some STAR WARS toys. From that moment on, I was Luke Skywalker: hanging upside down as I concentrated on getting that lightsaber before the wampa came; swinging across a bottomless Death Star pit with Leia in my arms; and saving my father from the evil of evils: the Dark Side. I thank you for putting out a magazine that lets me relive my dreams and fantasies by going beyond the movies to show us the geniuses who gave us this wondrous universe. With all the merchandise and commercialism surrounding STAR WARS right now, just remember what STAR WARS really is—a pleasing escape from this reality into a better one.

DENGAR1978@aol.com

♦ I am an art education major at the University of Kentucky, Lexington. During my sophomore year, I was assigned to make a "personality box" that best showed what makes me tick. The first thing that came to my mind was to build a TIE fighter—a hot pink one! The actual creation ended up being large enough to sit in. Why pink? While the TIE fighter is an aggressive kind of machine, I



am not quite as menacing. The pink shows a softer, more feminine side to my take-charge personality. The interior was lit with Christmas lights, padded with comfy pillows and decorated with pictures of my family and friends. Hidden speakers played a medley of my favorite tunes intermingled with the STAR WARS soundtrack. The theme of STAR WARS in my piece summed up who I am: a dreamer, a fighter and a romantic. Thanks to George Lucas for getting me an "A" in my class. DAWN WILSON, Clarksville, TNdmwilsoo@mik.uky.edu

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dawn's pink, padded TIE, is the vessel of choice, no doubt, of Imperial Mary Kay Cosmetics reps. Dawn's missive and photo, as well as our Belgian fan's request below, are among dozens of similar letters we've received. They've inspired us to launch a NEW DEPARTMENT IN SWGM, in which we'll highlight you—the fans. Send us letters and photos showing off your collections, costumes

or other STAR WARS creations. We'll pick the best ones for publication, beginning in Issue #6. But, please, send photos that do not have to be returned. Send everything to STAR WARS Galaxy Magazine, Fans, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004.

♦ I would like you to create a new column in which fans could showcase some of their unique collectibles and tell the great stories of how they got them. Questions could be asked and answers given. In the meantime, allow me to congratulate you on your magazine. In Belgium it is not easy to get your hands on STAR WARS info. Thank the Force you guys came along with this great stuff! MARK "JEDI" DERMULWILRIJK, Belgium

♦ I have an interesting story to tell. I am a 16-year-old STAR WARS fanatic. I work at Jewel, a local grocery store, where I am a cashier. On my uniform, I always wear a Boba Fett pin. One day recently, a lady and her son, who I would say was about eight, came through my line. The kid looked closely at my Fett pin, then said, "Hey, Mom, look! STAR WARS!" I was touched. I thought I was somewhat of an anachronism when it came to STAR WARS, but here was this kid who missed them all the first time around. His mom looked curiously at my pin and said, "Oh, no, David, that's one of the Power Rangers." I almost freaked. However, I kept my calm and said, "No, ma'am, your son is right. That is STAR WARS... very STAR WARS." The kid gave his mom an I-told-you-so look, and I gave him a Jewel sticker. CHRISTOPHER R. BERND, Palatine, IL P.S. Fett doesn't really look like a Power Ranger... does he? More likely that they look like him.



♦ I'm a dedicated 18-year-old STAR WARS fan. I was very young when the films were first released, but I do remember seeing Return of the Jedi. Today, STAR WARS is still an important part of my life. My best friend, Jason Hicks, and I were separated two years ago when I moved to New Mexico. We keep in touch mostly through mail, which is always STAR WARS-themed. I get excited every time I open the mailbox and see a New Republic communiqué addressed to Han Solo: Coruscant. If Jason (Luke) wants to tell me about school, he'll say "the Academy," or his car, "the Corellian Chevette," or his parents, "the Senate." Recently I visited Jason in Florida. We went to MGM Studios at Disney World dressed in our Han and Luke outfits to pay tribute to the Star Tours ride. I plan to return to Orlando hopefully for the first official STAR WARS convention and meet up with my best friend again. TONY MAGNOLE, Albuquerque

EDITOR'S NOTE: You won't be alone, Tony... or is it Han? Disney World and Lucasfilm are planning to host thousands of STAR WARS fans, costumed and otherwise, at the convention in 1997. Until then, SWGM will, of course, keep everyone informed as details are available.



♦ Greetings STAR WARS fans throughout the world! I just wanted you all to know that the force of STAR WARS is strong also here in Norway. I've been a devoted fan myself since 1980. I collect anything with a STAR WARS/Lucasfilm label on it. About this magazine, there is only one thing to say: Impressive, most impressive!! Keep up the good work. PÅL JØRGENSEN, Skudeneshavn, Norway

♦ **THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!!!** Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would find a mag like yours. I live in the Philippines, and I guess that's one of the hardest places in the world to find

STAR WARS stuff. I only recently got STAR WARS crazy, and I totally flipped when I saw all the STAR WARS things in the U.S.! I'm glad STAR WARS is finally getting all this attention. It deserves it. Anyone can e-mail me at nicsev@aol.com. NICOLE SEVERINO

♦ I congratulate you on a wonderful fourth issue. It's so good, in fact, I've read it from cover to cover twice! The cover artwork [by J. Scott Campbell and Alex Garner] is superb, perfectly capturing the feel of The Empire Strikes Back. And I'm glad to see Lando Calrissian featured for once. Lando's character was too under-used in both Empire and Return of the Jedi, and there wasn't much memorabilia produced bearing his likeness, either. I'm a big fan of Lando (and



Boba Fett), so the interview with Billy Dee Williams ["Swash-buckler in Disguise"] was a real treat. All in all, the magazine was a fitting tribute to Empire. JAMES SIMMONDS, Northants, England

♦ I love this magazine! Where have you guys been for the past decade??? I can't wait to find out information about the three new STAR WARS movies that are in the works. I'm dying to know the names of the new films, possible directors and possible cast members. Also, I was wondering whether or not John

Williams' talent will once again be a part of STAR WARS. PHIL

MARTIN, Columbus, GA MARTIN_RONALD@mercury.csg.peachnet.edu

EDITOR'S NOTE: SWGM can't wait until Lucasfilm lets even us know all the answers to such questions. However, we do have a few clues as to what's happening. Read the item in "Around the Galaxy."

♦ In Issue #4 you had an interview with Kevin Smith about Clerks (Around the Galaxy: "Mr. Smith Goes to the Mall"), but you forgot to mention the coolest part of that so-called "STAR WARS Scene": the music by Supernova! Their song "Chewbacca" (the original version) is what first got me into STAR WARS and should not be overlooked. BEN (OBI-WAN KENOBI) GOETTING, Newport Beach, CA

♦ I am a devoted STAR WARS fan and an avid reader of your magazine. However, if there is one thing that deeply concerns me about the direction that STAR WARS is heading in regards to non-humans, it would be the term "alien." The term is used quite loosely when referring to all non-human species. In my vocabulary the word alien is used when referring to a species not indigenous to the planet it is currently inhabiting. Not, as most of you seem to believe, to be used when referring to non-humans in general. I prefer to use the terms "creature" or simply "non-human." Even George Lucas had his "creature shop," as opposed to his alien shop! Two huge STAR WARS fans, GERALD S. CARPENTER & BRIAN R. CARPENTER may44bwu@aol.com



♦ Envelope art by CHRIS COWDRILL Birmingham, Eng.

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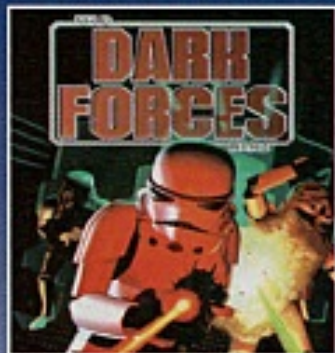
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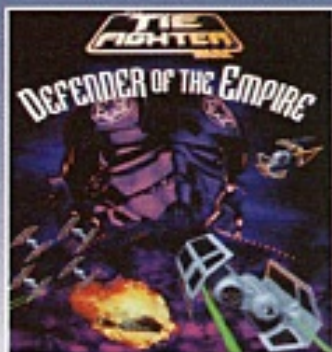
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AROUND THE GALAXY



Del Rey **REVS** **IT UP**

Hot on the heels of the just-published *Star Wars: The Essential Guide to Characters*, the illustrated trade paperback previewed in this issue, Del Rey Books has an equally authoritative companion on the launch pad. *The Essential Guide to Vehicles and Vessels* will blast off to bookstores and comics shops in March, giving fans an exhaustive reference to all the important machines that transport heroes and villains throughout the *Star Wars* universe. Written by West End

Games editor Bill Smith and illustrated by Doug Chiang (Lucasfilm concept art director) and Troy Vigil (art director at Zanart), the guide is packed with facts, artwork, photos and other elements culled from the movies, books, comics and other media. It's a companion that will surely transport fans to hours of *Star Wars* ecstasy. SWGM has already gotten so carried away with the book, in fact, we're preparing a multipage, art-filled preview for Issue #6.



Perfect Gentlemen

That title might not be the most accurate description of either Boba Fett or Admiral Ackbar, but it does describe the intricate detail and authenticity that goes into the making of the new Fett and Ackbar maquettes from Illusive Originals. The company that has created a clamorous demand for its life-like Yoda reproduction has come back with a similarly impressive launch of its maquette line. Maquettes are perfectly scaled preproduction models that are used in making the actual movie

characters. Illusive creator Mario Chiodo was made privy to the Lucasfilm Archives in order to produce exact molds of the original maquettes for Boba and the Mon Calamari admiral. Sculpted from foam latex and hand-painted, both maquettes, limited to 10,000 each, look as close to the real characters as possible. At suggested retail prices of around \$130 for Admiral Ackbar and \$260 for Boba Fett, including hand-written letters of authenticity, the maquettes will be sold during upcoming QVC *STAR WARS* specials and through Lucasfilm's Jawa Trader (1-800-TRUE-FAN), Intelec International catalogs (1-800-896-8177), Starlog Stores (1-800-STARLOG) and select Spencer Stores.

UPDATES: PREQUEL

SWGM's sources at Skywalker Ranch have revealed some inside buzz.... George Lucas is immersed in writing the scripts for all three *STAR WARS* prequel movies, working at home four days a week and going to his office at the Ranch every Friday. He already has the whole story planned out in his head, now he's putting it on paper. George talks almost daily with prequel producer Rick McCallum. Recently they've been zeroing in on the films' budgets, locations, special effects, casting and other logistics. Still, no firm date for the launch of production on Episode One has been set. At the Ranch, a full-time crew of preproduction artists are designing the look of the characters, vehicles and settings; they've even begun 3-D sculpting of certain elements.

Meanwhile, work on *Star Wars: The Special Edition*—the theatrical rerelease of the original movie, containing 4 1/2 minutes of new material—continues. (The release date, by the way, has been moved up, from Memorial Day Weekend in May





TRIPLE VISION

The first two series of Topps' STAR WARS Galaxy cards took fans on two very different and fresh artistic journeys. Now, the third series in the Galaxy trilogy is ready for viewing, and it provides yet another original, creative twist on the saga. 🌌 *Galaxy 3*, set to ship in mid-November, is a 90-card set. It is a completely new and distinct series that explores more fascinating aspects of the STAR WARS universe. It features not only fantastic new art by some of the genre's hottest talents, but also an exciting new computer-generated design by the innovative Norm Dwyer (Donna Matrix). 🌌 The series is divided into several subsets, each one a unique extrapolation. The first is an 11-card collection of the wonderful STAR WARS book cover art of Drew Struzan, one of Lucasfilm's favorite illustrators. Among the pieces reproduced are covers from *The Glove of Darth Vader*, *The Truce at Bakura*, *The Crystal Star* and *Children of the Jedi*. 🌌 Another subset includes 24 rare and never-before-seen pieces commissioned for a variety of STAR

WARS products and promotions. Works of such artists as Bunny Carter, Andrew Skilleter, Bill Sienkiewicz, Ralph McQuarrie and Dave Dorman are showcased, along with SWGM covers by Ken Steacy, the Hildebrandt brothers and the Gen 13 duo, J. Scott Campbell and Alex Garner. 🌌 There's plenty of brand-new, exclusive art in *Galaxy 3*, too.

A nine-card subset entitled "Newest Visions" boasts Kelly Freas' take on Luke threading the treacherous Eye of the Needle and a scene of Boba Fett at the mouth of the Sarlacc by Rick Buckler. "Alternate Visions" are supplied by some unexpected guest artists such as Jack Davis, of MAD Magazine fame, and Gahan Wilson, who, if you know his macabre, humorous cartoons in *Playboy* and *National Lampoon*, is an ideal interpreter of the notorious Mos Eisley cantina scene. 🌌

GALAXY GIVEAWAY!

Topps is giving away 12 complete sets of its all-new STAR WARS Galaxy 3 trading cards.

To enter the random drawing, send your name, age and address in a letter or on a postcard to Galaxy 3 Giveaway, STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004. Entries must be received by January 31, 1997. Winners will be notified by mail.

& SPECIAL EDITION

1997 to February 21, 1997.) New footage, both live-action and computer-generated, will feature Jabba the Hutt confronting Han in Docking Bay 94, more characters on the streets of Mos Eisley and a new shot in the desert. While some of the additions are dramatic, many are very subtle. But overall, we're told, fans will be blown away. Stay tuned for more buzz in the next issue of SWGM....

One of the most provocative subsets is called "From Camelot to Tatooine: The Campbell Connection." Illustrated and written by Russell Walks, these nine cards depict scenes from the movies that evoke the philosophy of the late Joseph Campbell, creator of *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* and author of numerous articles about storytelling and mythology. There's also a tribute to the 15th anniversary of *Empire* and a 12-card, foil-stamped subset based on the video and computer games produced by LucasArts Entertainment Company. 🌌 Six visions of STAR WARS' most notable bounty hunters, by Image artists including Joe Chiodo and Brett Booth, are printed using the Clearzone process, a see-through variation of Topps Finest Chromium technology. Walter Simonson's six illustrations complete the 18-card etched-foil chase card subset, preceded by a half dozen each in *Galaxy 1* and *2*. Combined with display art painted by fan-favorite Simon Bisley (above) and backs written by Gary Gerani, Ingar Westburg and Steve Sansweet, *Galaxy 3* is a fitting addition to the best-selling Topps trilogy.

TIE One On

Some people like to wear their emotions on their sleeves, and now STAR WARS fans have the opportunity to wear theirs around their necks. The Ralph Marlin STAR WARS Collection, which began with one tie in 1992, will have grown very soon to a wardrobe including more than a dozen tie designs (silk and poly), caps, silk boxer shorts and embroidered T-shirts. Available at J.C. Penny stores, Suncoast and gift, hobby and menswear outlets nationwide—or you can order direct by calling 1-800-922-TIES—these items let you make a fashion statement that always opens with, “A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...”



NEW CHROMIUM IMAGES FROM ZANART: STAR WARS ART FEATURED ON LUCASARTS GAME BOXES AND 20TH CENTURY FOX'S RERELEASE OF THE TRILOGY ON VIDEO.



Showing Their METAL

Talk about *STAR WARS*' enduring images.... Imagine the durability of photos and art from the trilogy permanently etched onto metal cards. That's the attraction of the collectibles from Metallic Impressions. The Wilmington, NC, company, a division of CUI, Inc., has produced three sets of standard-size metal cards, secured in attractive tin canisters—20 each with images from *STAR WARS: A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back* and six featuring Dave Dorman's *Dark Empire* comics covers. In December they'll release a 20-card *Return of the Jedi* collection, limited to 49,900 sets, to be followed by *Dark Empire II* in March. Next year Metallic Impressions will also come out with sets based on *Shadows of the Empire*, *Heir to the Empire* and other *STAR WARS* adventures. Look for them wherever you buy comics and trading cards.



NEW FROM GALLOOB: MICRO MACHINES FIGURE COLLECTIONS—JAWAS, IMPERIAL OFFICERS AND ECHO BASE REBELS ON HOTH.



THE WRITE STUFF

Every day, the SWGM mailbag contains any number of requests for the addresses of the main stars from the *Star Wars* movies. There remains so much that still has to be said, it seems, to the actors who brought George Lucas' visions to the silver screen. We can't guarantee they'll

write back, but here are addresses where fan mail can be sent to the top three (be sure to tell 'em SWGM sent ya):

MARK HAMILL

c/o Paul Doherty
Cunningham, Escott & Dipene
10635 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 130
Los Angeles, CA 90025

CARRIE FISHER

c/o Kevin Huvane
Creative Artists Agency
9830 Wilshire Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

HARRISON FORD

c/o Patricia McQueeney
10279 Century Wood Dr.
Century City, CA 90067



COLORFUL CHARACTERS

Model makers who'd rather not tackle the challenge of painting their vinyl assemblies will be interested in the *STAR WARS* kits from Polydata Resources, a new member of the Lucasfilm family, located in North York, Ontario. Polydata's Erik Ko tells *SWGM* that the company has already released its Luke Skywalker model kit, with Obi-Wan Kenobi coming this fall, followed by a Tusken Raider at Christmas.



Selling at a recommended retail price of \$35 at comics and hobby stores, the kits' parts are pre-painted and require only minimal trimming for easy assembly. Each model has an individually numbered custom seal, and the packaging features art by comics illustrators including Mike Mignola (*Hellboy*), Adam Hughes (*Ghost*) and Ron Boyd (*Legend of Superheroes*).

GALAXY GIVEAWAY!

Polydata Resources is giving away 12 Luke Skywalker pre-painted model kits.

To enter the random drawing, send your name, age and address in a letter or on a postcard to Model Giveaway, *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004. Entries must be received by January 31, 1996. Winners will be notified by mail.

Within Site

Net-heads are casting far and wide for *STAR WARS* news and info on the Internet's voluminous World Wide Web. There are lots of unofficial sites up, but now you can link up to several official ones. Check out the following:

LucasArts Entertainment
http://www.lucasarts.com

THX
http://www.thx.com

20th Century Fox Home Entertainment
http://www.20thc.com

Ballantine Books
http://www.randomhouse.com/delrey/

Bantam Doubleday Dell Books
http://www.bdd.com

Berkley Books
http://www.berkley.com

Lewis Galoob Toys
http://www.galoob.com

Sega of America
http://www.sega.com



They've Been FRAMED

That's the happy fate awaiting *STAR WARS* fans who invest in the new limited-edition collectibles from Willits Designs. What they'll get is a genuine 70-millimeter film clip from an actual, complete *STAR WARS: A New Hope* reel, framed with a history card describing memorable moments from that scene. The first series, consisting of 12 editions from the movie—including Luke, Darth, Han, Chewbacca and C-3PO and R2-D2—are limited to 9,500 complete sets per edition, selling for \$25 each. Willits is also marketing signed and numbered Ralph McQuarrie lithographs, framed with a film clip from the scene depicted in the illustration.

COMING IN JANUARY BOUNTY HUNTERS SPECIAL!

Boba Fett is the all-time winner of Best Supporting Actor award. Yet he's not alone among the nefarious bounty hunters who hold fans' fascination. In Issue #6, *SWGM* will take you into the seamy worlds of Fett, Bossk, Dengar, Zuckuss, IG-88, 4-LOM and other merciless mercenaries. We'll track down the writers, actors and various creators who have brought them to villainous life in movies, TV, books, comics and elsewhere in the *Star Wars* galaxy... plus a bounty hunters 8-page fold-out!!

ALSO IN ISSUE #6:

- * Close-up on cover illustrator Chris Moeller and his heavy-hitting comics artwork.
- * The making of *Star Wars* model kits.
- * More prequel movie news and details about next spring's *Shadows of the Empire*.

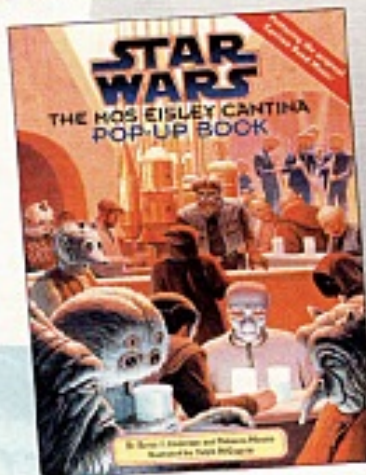
- * Behind the screens at LucasArts Entertainment Company.
- * How FX masters created the trilogy's spaceships and other models.
- * NOTE: We were unable to hold our on-line chat with *Lucasfilm*, so the report planned for Issue #5 will be in #6.
- * Plus... new RPG adventure... new products... contests & giveaways... and more!

GALAXY GIVEAWAY!

SWGM is giving away 100 copies of this issue's cover, signed by the Hildebrandts.

To enter the random drawing, send your name, age and address in a letter or on a postcard to: Hildebrandts, *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004. Entries must be received by January 31, 1996. Winners will be notified by mail.

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BROWN. THE
CANTINA FI-
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BLASTER LIGHTS
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AND MUSIC.



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- Read excerpts of new **STAR WARS** fiction — before it hits the bookstores
- Check out original comics stories created exclusively by Dark Horse Comics
- Surf the Internet with our online experts and get strategy tips from the video and CD-ROM game designers
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REMASTERS OF THE STAR WARS TRILOGY

With video technology and marketing savvy, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment has rereleased the STAR WARS Trilogy on video

BY NICK PORTANTIERE

OKAY, first the bad news. After January 1996, the original version of *STAR WARS* will no longer be available for sale on home video.

Now before you jump into a Sarlacc pit, listen up. The good news actually is great news because *STAR WARS*, along with its two sequels, have been digitally mastered by THX and now feature stunningly superior picture and sound quality. It's part of the *STAR WARS* Trilogy relaunch, an innovative undertaking by Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment designed to introduce the saga to younger audiences while rekindling interest among those who grew up with the films years ago.

STAR WARS: A New Hope, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* were released on August 29 using the THX Digital Mastering program, created by Lucasfilm Ltd., which provides viewers with enhanced audio and video quality as close to the original theatrical versions as possible. But that's just one piece of this pie. Fox has begun a marketing blitz that includes new packaging, in-store events in cities throughout the U.S. and overseas, plus a fun-filled Internet promotion. Additionally, Fox unleashed a media blowout that will include TV and radio ads as well as billboards appearing on everything from building facades to city buses. If there is anyone in the galaxy who somehow has never heard of *STAR WARS*, that will soon change.

The new and improved trilogy videos, each of which includes a short interview with George Lucas, hit the stores on August 29. If you want to add them to your collection, however, don't wait



THE THX-MASTERED TRILOGY IS PACKAGED IN BOXES FEATURING NEW ART. OVERSEAS PACKAGING SHOWCASES ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN ALVIN, ONE SHOWN AT RIGHT.



VERSE



too long because they'll only be available through January 31 of next year. In February 1997, the *STAR WARS* Special Edition will be released in theaters. That eagerly awaited version, as has been previously reported here, will feature four and a half minutes of new footage.

Lucasfilm's THX Digital Mastering has been used on dozens of laser discs over the past two years, including the *STAR WARS* Trilogy. However, the trilogy is the first VHS application of this technology.

"Our objective was to make these films look the way they did when they were originally photographed," says Dave Schnuelle, principal engineer of THX. "The thing about the films' transfer to home video years ago is that they weren't true to the originals. The colors were wrong, and in some scenes the lighting was so bright that it looked like daytime even though it was supposed to be nighttime. THX has allowed us to correct that."

Thanks to THX, viewers also will hear as well as see a difference. "Essentially we've created new soundtracks by reassembling the original music, sound effects and dialogue while adding some new sound effects," says Schnuelle. "There is a clearly audible difference; there is much more bass and a wider dynamic range in the new soundtracks. If you rent or buy the new cassettes and you've got a stereo VCR at home, you'll notice the difference."

Schnuelle adds that, in conjunction with the THX Digital Mastering, the use of advanced grain-reduction and dirt-concealment devices has further improved the quality of the films. "Some footage [for *STAR WARS*] was shot in the desert in Tunisia, so the film wasn't as clean as it could have been," he points out. "We have electronically removed the dirt from the original negative, thereby improving the picture quality dramatically."

Deborah Mitchell, director of brand marketing for Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, states that bringing the trilogy into the nineties was Fox's goal. "We wanted to modernize these classic films, from a visual standpoint, so they would be more appealing to today's audiences," she says. "This includes not only the films themselves, but their packaging as well."

In the U.S., the previous video boxes have been replaced by ones featuring bold, powerful images of three characters: Darth Vader (*A New Hope*), a stormtrooper (*The Empire Strikes Back*) and Yoda (*Return of the Jedi*). The international versions feature an art montage by renowned movie poster illustrator John Alvin.

The marketing campaign for the trilogy release has some of the fanfare of a new film. In fact, Mitchell notes that Fox is spending more on this program than it did for recent new home

VIRTUAL REALITY FOR VIRTUALLY NOTHING



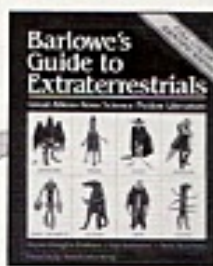
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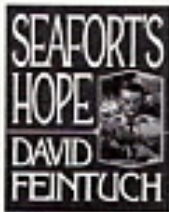
1347 Warriors in the Way by Harry Harrison
\$47.90/\$14.98



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\$12.95x



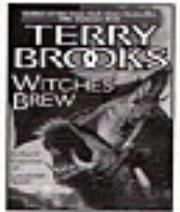
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\$19.95/\$14.98



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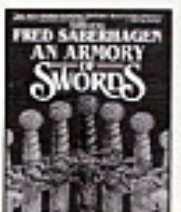
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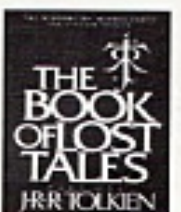
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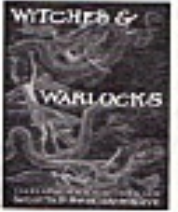
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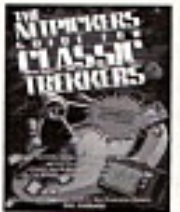
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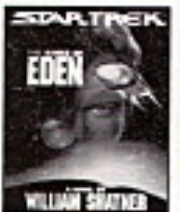
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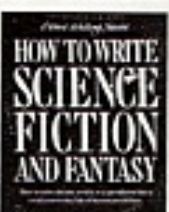
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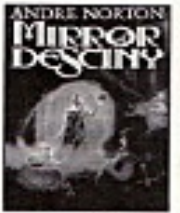
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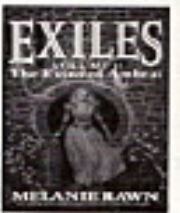
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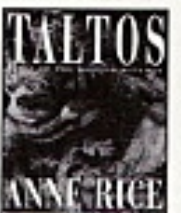
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\$22.00/\$10.98



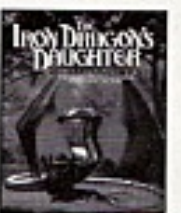
0803 Exiles by Melanie Rawn
\$20.00/\$10.98



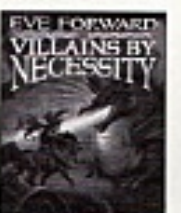
1222 The Trials of the Titans by William S. Barington
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0521* Talto by Anne Rice
\$25.00/\$11.98



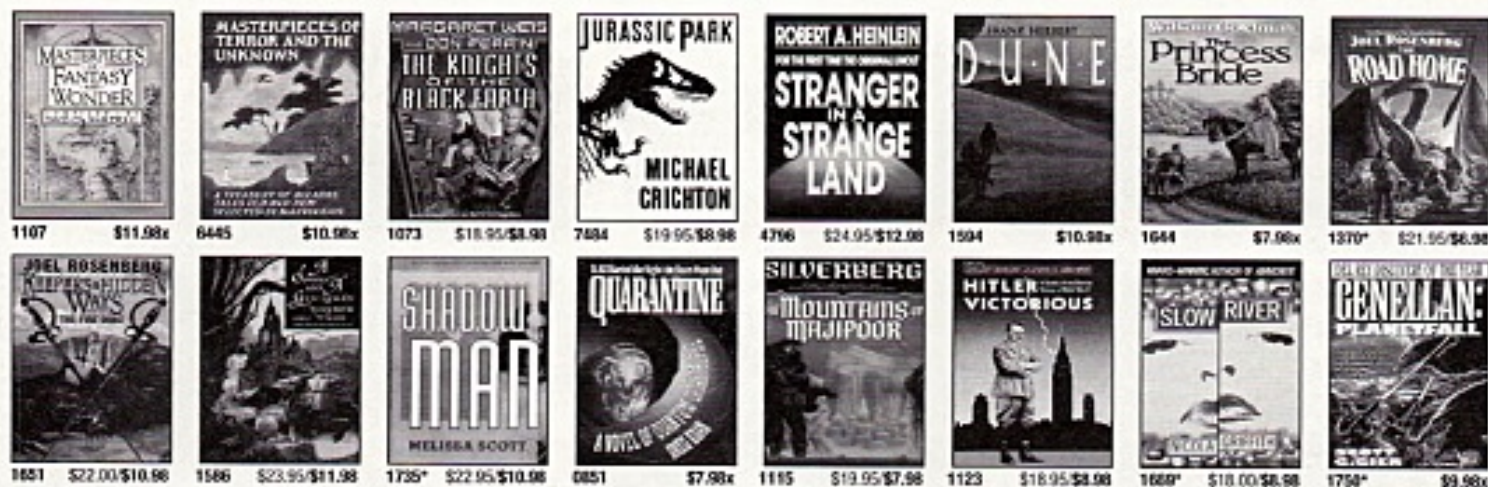
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SWG 11/95

THE "HOME PAGE" FROM THE FOX WEB SITE INVITES NETHEADS TO DOWNLOAD VIDEO CLIPS, READ BIOS OF THE ACTORS AND ENTER CONTESTS. THE SITE IS UPDATED WEEKLY.



video releases such as *Speed* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*.

Fox kicked off its massive effort in the U.S. on July 15 with radio, cable TV and print advertising. Outdoor ads include billboards in 35 markets, while buses in New York City carry the news on their side panels. A network TV campaign began on August 23.

And there's more. On your next trip to the supermarket, look closely as you walk down the cereal aisle. A promotion with Kellogg, through mid-December, allows consumers to receive discounts and other offers by buying specially marked boxes of Kellogg's Raisin Bran, Corn Pops and Apple Jacks cereals.

Mitchell indicates that there will be numerous in-store events featuring authentically costumed *STAR WARS* characters at Kmart, Wal-Mart and other large retailers throughout the country. Those events, which began around Labor Day, will be advertised in local newspapers, at video stores and on Fox Home Entertainment's new World Wide Web site on the Internet.

Surf-happy Netheads should visit the Web site (<http://www.tcfhe.com>), which went on-line July 15 and is updated weekly. "It's an interactive experience that is not only fun, but also extremely visual," says Ruby Randall, vice president of marketing services for Fox Home Entertainment.

Fox's *STAR WARS* Web site consists of four sections. The storyline section features downloadable video clips from the trilogy. In the character section, you'll find art and descriptions of the films' characters, plus biographies and filmogra-

phies of the actors who played them, and downloadable sound bites. The backlot section provides behind-the-scenes information on the making of the films. And perhaps most inviting is the screening room section, where users participate in trivia challenges and enter contests for prizes, including copies of the new videos, trips, posters, even a life-size reproduction of Yoda.

Randall, who notes that a popular Web site typically will have about 20,000 "hits" (recorded uses) per week, proudly states that Fox's *STAR WARS* site registered more than a million hits during its first four weeks on-line and almost 400,000 in a single week. "I think that speaks volumes about the enduring popularity of *STAR WARS*," she says.

Fox's international program, which will kick off in 22 countries, is especially creative. For example, seven life-size X-wing fighters will be featured in promotional events, with spectators invited to climb aboard. "They're almost 40-feet long, and were built to the exact specifications from the movie," Jeffrey Yapp, president of Fox Home Entertainment International, says of the replicas.

At Corte Ingles, the largest department store in Barcelona, Spain, a 150-foot replica of the *Millennium Falcon* has been constructed in a plaza in front of the store. A train ride will travel into the spaceship, wherein lurks Darth Vader and his stormtroopers.

The relaunch also will be celebrated with festivities at Planet Hollywood restaurants in Hong Kong, London, Paris, Seoul and Sydney. "No one

has ever taken a film that was released years earlier and put this kind of promotional effort behind it," says Yapp, noting that the international campaign launched in October. "Many retailers were skeptical at first, but now they are very excited about the relaunch."

Back in the USA, the digitally mastered *STAR WARS* Trilogy videos are available through January as a set for \$49.98 and individually for \$19.98. Inside each package you'll find a book of coupons good for discounts on licensed *STAR WARS* merchandise, including action figures, apparel, animation art and CD-ROM games.

More importantly, you'll find a thrilling new way to enjoy the *STAR WARS* experience. ☺

Nick Portantaira is a freelance writer based in Matawan, New Jersey.



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HOW MANY TIMES have you wished you could clone yourself? There you are, with a bizillion things to do, or with two places to be at the same time, thinking how easy it would be if there just were another you. While the notion is tempting, if (for now) unrealistic, you might want to first consider the unusual case of the Hildebrandts.

Now, that may sound like a set-up for a weird tale. And there is some weirdness associated with the Hildebrandts. But the story of the 56-year-old identical twins, Greg and Tim, who were virtually inseparable for the first 40 years of their lives, is remarkably true. It's a story of two gifted artists who, in the mid 1970s, gained incredible success and popularity for their uncanny, almost magical ability to work as one—as clones. Yet it's also a tale of personal discovery, sometimes painful, by which Greg and Tim have triumphed as individuals. Most recently, it's a story of how the brothers again are in a high creative gear and back in the *STAR WARS* universe, beginning with our front cover and moving forward on a special new card set.

Greg popped into the world five minutes earlier than Tim, in Detroit in 1939. Their parents, George and Germaine, had trouble telling the two babies apart at first, and soon noted that besides birthdays, the boys shared identical needs, desires and interests.

A strong common interests was art, a childhood pastime their parents lovingly fostered. "Our mother gave us coloring books when we were about three," says Tim, "and she noticed that we always stayed inside the lines." Greg recalls "Pa" sitting the boys on his knees Sunday mornings and reading them the color "funnies." They both have vivid memories of lying in the backyard with their mother as she told them fantastic tales of fairies who lived in the grass.

As that was still before the age of television, Greg and Tim relied on storytelling, books, newspapers, magazines, comics and

**Twin
brothers
Greg & Tim
Hildebrandt
have
achieved
greatness
not only as a
fantastic art
tandem
but also as
unique
individuals
By
BOB WOODS**

**IT'S BEEN 18
YEARS SINCE
THE HILDE-
BRANDTS
TEAMED UP ON
THEIR *STAR
WARS* POSTER.
NOW TIM (LEFT)
AND GREG ARE
AT IT AGAIN.**



ALONE TO





HILDEBRANDT

TOGETHER

radio plays to feed their fertile young minds with images. Another world, bursting with color, dimension and motion, opened when they were five. "Our mom took us to the theater to see *Pinocchio*," Tim remembers.

That visual cornucopia naturally led the boys to draw favorite scenes and characters—like Hal Foster's Prince Valiant—though their mother never let them trace over existing art, instead encouraging originality. As they grew older, they were further influenced by trips to museums, hours buried in comic books and afternoons spent watching science fiction double features.

By the time they reached high school, in the '50s, the Hildebrandts' destiny was pretty well set. While other teenage guys were ogling girls and worshiping Mickey Mantle, Johnny Unitas and various sports heroes, Greg and Tim were drooling over Impressionist paintings and looking up to artistic geniuses such as N. C. Wyeth, Howard Pyle, Maxfield Parrish and George Pal. Rather than dating or playing ball, they spent weekends painting and building sets and making costumes for their homemade sci-fi flicks.

The Hildebrandts hardly were alone in their fascinations. Plenty of their contemporaries—including a guy named Lucas—grew up absorbing similar influences. What's amazing about Greg and Tim is they did it all together. Even for twins, their single-minded love and dedication to exactly the same artistic areas was extraordinary. They completed every project together. "We never had any conflicts over each other's work," says Greg. "We encouraged each other."

After graduating from high school, they joined the army reserves—together, of course. While in the service, they participated in an experiment to test the extrasensory power of twins. Using a deck of cards, one guessed what card the other was holding. "We were right about 90 percent of the time," says Tim.



RIGHT: AMONG THE FANTASTIC CREATURES IN TOLKIEN'S *LORD OF THE RINGS* ILLUSTRATED BY THE HILDEBRANDTS IS GOLLUM. BELOW: FROM THE BROTHERS' BOOK, *URSHURAK, CRYSLANDON, THE ELF CITADEL*.



Their hitch with Uncle Sam was followed by a brief stint at the Meinzinger School of Art in Detroit. Soon, though, they realized they already possessed enough skills to prepare them to seek their fame and fortune in the art world.

The Hildebrandts had always dreamed of working for Disney someday, but as neophytes, however ambitious and talented, they settled for jobs at a local animation studio, Jam Handy, where they did a lot of not-terribly-satisfying, commercial stuff, like "The History of Soup," for Campbell.

They finally left Detroit in the early 1960s, moving to New Jersey to produce documentary films for Bishop Fulton Sheen and the Catholic church. Divergent as making missionary movies in Africa was from their real aspirations, the boys' artistic passions never wavered.

By 1974, Greg and Tim were both married and raising families—and living apart for the first time. They had begun taking illustration assignments,



mostly for children's books and advertising, but still weren't where they wanted to be, creatively or professionally, and the frustration was mounting. Then they discovered J. R. R. Tolkien, the legendary fantasy author.

"We read Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy," Tim recalls, "and we said, 'We gotta illustrate this!'" As it turned out, somebody already had; Ballantine was publishing Tolkien calendars illustrated by Tim Kirk. However, the calendar Tim's wife, Rita, gave him for Christmas had a notice in the back, inviting artists interested in tackling Tolkien to submit samples.

In an old barn that served as their jumbled studio, the Hildebrandts immersed themselves in Middle-earth. Amidst gobs of acrylic paints, reams of intricate pencil sketches and piles of costumes and props, they created an incredible portfolio. A few months later, on a rainy February morning, they packed up much of it, in giant plastic garbage bags to keep the art dry, and marched unannounced into the Manhattan offices of Ian Summers, Ballantine's Tolkien maven. Coincidentally, Summers' ongoing search for an artist to replace Kirk had been approaching the desperation point.

There stood two bearded, disheveled, wild-eyed artists, who proceeded to dump out an array of beautiful drawings. "Eureka!" was Summers' response, and he signed the twins to a contract on the spot. For three years, beginning in 1976, the Brothers Hildebrandt, as they became known, brought Tolkien's mythical, mystical world of Hobbits, wizards and dragons to vibrant life. Their final calendar sold more than a million copies.

The years of hard work and dreaming were paying off. Their distinctive, almost unbelievable style, of working on paintings together, was recognized and revered. Their techniques of predetermining shadows, light, colors and textures—which included photographing models in precise poses—were critically acclaimed.

With notoriety came plum assignments, one that forever linked them to *STAR WARS*. It came nine days prior to the film's release in 1977. They got a panicked call from an agency, asking if they could deliver a painted



poster for an unknown fantasy space film—in three days! “We did it in 36 hours,” Greg says, recalling that they had only a stack of black and white photos for reference, and nothing of Mark Hamill or Carrie Fisher. “One of us would sleep while the other one painted.” The result was a classic piece that remains a seminal image of the trilogy, and that has kept the Hildebrandts major figures among fans (see “Rebel Report” on page 4).

Success rekindled the brothers’ originality. They’d done too much derivative and imitative work. They wanted to create something all their own. Thus was born *Urshurak*, an original sword and sorcery tale that enveloped Greg and Tim for more than two years. They initially produced the story in book form in 1979, with a friend and writer, Jerry Nichols, and then envisioned it as an epic movie. They were devastated when, after preparing drawings, storyboards and other pre-production materials, they were told that it was simply too expensive to make. The stressful process left them drained and, worse, divisive. “We faded away,” Tim says. “We just sat for six months.”

In 1981, they split up, unamiably, and didn’t speak to one another for six years. It was an agonizing, fear-ridden separation they don’t talk about publicly. Yet it was also a time of individual fulfillment. Greg, working with their current business manager, Jean Scrocco, illustrated classic stories for Scrocco’s Unicorn Publishing House, such as *Pinocchio*, *Dracula* and *Robin Hood*. Tim painted book covers for science fiction and fantasy titles and was commissioned for a variety of advertising pieces, including box art for a never-produced *Return of the Jedi* video game from Parker Brothers.

Following a gradual reconciliation, the Hildebrandts



LEFT: IN 1992, THE BROTHERS LENT THEIR INIMITABLE STYLE TO SPIDER-MAN AND OTHER MARVEL COMICS SUPERHEROES. RIGHT: SKETCH OF XIZOR (PRONOUNCED “SHEE-ZOR”), A MAJOR NEW CHARACTER FEATURED IN *SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE*.

joined forces again late in 1992. Last year, they took the art world by storm with the 158-card Marvel Masterpieces collection, their dynamic depictions of comic book superheroes. In March, with writer Michael Uslan, they fulfilled a childhood fantasy by resurrecting *Terry and the Pirates*, the Milton Caniff newspaper strip they grew up admiring.

And now the Hildebrandts are back in the *STAR WARS* fold. They’ve already begun work on at least 100 original paintings based on the all-new *STAR WARS* adventure, *Shadows of the Empire*, for a card set from Topps.

“We can’t wait,” says Greg. “This is almost like...” Tim, the clone-like twin, picks up his brother, “...making our own *STAR WARS* movie.”



DOUBLE CROSS

DANGER LURKS WHEN TWO MYSTERIOUS EGGMATES



on ord mantell

EMERGE FROM THE SHADOWS

BY MICHAEL MIKAELIAN



THE POLLUTED ATMOSPHERE OF ORD MANTELL CASTS strange hues across its surface as the sun sets on another dreary day. A black vessel slowly descends from the sky and lands in a dilapidated hangar bay. From the vessel, a Corellian transport, a walkway is lowered, and a lone figure disembarks. A small group of locals looks on, but one glimpse of the ominous being sends them scurrying. That's not an unusual reaction to Cypher Bos, a notorious bounty hunter. Indeed, the entire Nalrithian species of insectoids is generally feared throughout the galaxy. * Cypher strides through the streets of Ord Mantell, his mind focused on his destination. He parts the sparse foot traffic with his very presence. As he approaches a pair of Chadra-Fan, he can sense their fear. The bat-like beings exude a scent that echoes the terror on their faces. Cypher grins, obviously proud of his ability to inspire fear in others. * Cypher has come to speak with a Chadra-Fan named Baajik, a secret double agent for either the Rebels or the Hutts, whichever side serves his immediate needs. For now, at least, he's working for the Rebels. As the two scurry away, Cypher realizes that neither of them matches Baajik's description. * As Cypher turns off the main avenue onto a dark side street, he's being watched by a robed figure whose features are hidden under a heavy hood. The figure isn't tracking Cypher. He already knows that the Nalrithian is headed for the Drunken Bantha, the only place worth traveling this way for,

PENCILS BY WALTER MCDANIELS

INKS/COLOR BY SHAWN MARTINBROUGH





CYPHER BOS

TYPE: NALRITHIAN BOUNTY HUNTER

DEXTERITY 4D+2 - Blaster 7D+2, brawling parry 5D+1, dodge 5D, grenade 5D+2, melee combat 5D+2, melee parry 5D. **KNOWLEDGE** 2D+1 - Intimidation 4D, languages 3D, streetwise 4D+2, streetwise: Ord Mantell 6D. **MECHANICAL** 3D - Astrogation 4D, Space transports 5D, starship gunnery 4D+1. **PERCEPTION** 2D+2 - Command: Rebel spies 4D*, con 3D*, hide 3D, search 3D+2, sneak: urban 5D*. **STRENGTH** 3D+2 - Brawling 5D+2. **TECHNICAL** 2D+1 - Computer programming 2D+1*, security 5D, space transports repair: YT-1300 3D+1.

* Cypher gained these skills by draining all of Phoedris' memories after he killed him.

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Body Armor, Enhanced Senses, Mindlink, Resist Mind Control, Telepathy (see below). **CYBORGING:** Cypher Bos has had special cybernetic pain inhibitors implanted along his spine, allowing him to reduce the effects of damage by one category. All damage is received as normal, but all skill rolls (not including Strength) receive one less die penalty (no penalty for -1D, -1D for -2D, etc.). All Strength skills are unaffected by these inhibitors.

FORCE POINTS: 4
(2 of which were stolen from Phoedris)

CHARACTER POINTS: 12

MOVE: 10

EQUIPMENT: YT-1300 Corellian transport, bounty hunter armor, modified heavy blaster pistol (has as an additional setting, focused blast, +1D to hit, +2D to damage, range 3-10/11-30/31-60, concealed compartment in handle), 4 hellfire grenades (projects a flammable gel, range 0-2/3-4/5-6/7-9, damage 8D/6D/4D/2D first turn, -4D following 3 turns unless flames are extinguished), vibroblade.

because it's the place to find out anything worth knowing on Ord Mantell.

With dusk quickly approaching, the robed figure has no trouble hiding from the Imperial stormtroopers who march past the alley. He waits for them to go by, then warily continues toward the Bantha. As any good Rebel knows, getting caught now would surely lead to his execution. After all, he is carrying stolen information about an Imperial shipment of credits. The Rebellion plans to intercept the shipment and use the funds to outfit its new secret base on Hoth.

Even so, the mysterious Rebel isn't nearly as concerned with the stormtroopers as he is with Cypher Bos. He's certain Cypher is here also seeking credits, though in the form of Imperial bounties on Rebel spies.

The Drunken Bantha is teeming with activity as a myriad of species chatter in many languages, putting another day of dread behind them. The robed figure spots Cypher, sitting in a dark, secluded corner, speaking to Baajik.

"What is this?" the cloaked Rebel hisses to himself, incredulous that he's being sold out by Baajik—one of his own agents! The Rebel's hood falls away from his face enough to reveal his Nalrithian insectoid features.

There is a mental link shared by Nalrithian eggmates that allows them to think and act as a single entity. The link's range, though, is limited to no more than a dozen meters. For the last 20 minutes, Phoedris Bos—the robed Rebel—has managed to suppress the thought link between himself and his eggmate, Cypher Bos. But now the shock of Baajik's betrayal has broken Phoedris' concentration, and his one powerful thought ("No!") reverberates across the Drunken Bantha.

Of course, Cypher immediately detects the panicked presence of Phoedris and recognizes his eggmate's fear. He's sensed it twice before—while hunting down their other two eggmates. Compared with Phoedris, however, they were rather poor game and not much of a challenge. Phoedris is more than clever enough to evade Cypher indefinitely, yet now his allegiance to the Rebellion has given away his whereabouts. Perhaps the two might have even teamed up, Cypher thinks, but then quickly reminds himself that bleeding-heart Phoedris would never have gone for that.

With less grace than usual, Phoedris pushes past the throng of pirates and smugglers. He tries to persuade himself that Cypher did not detect his mental outburst, knowing, though, that the chances are slim. Phoedris' outrage was so intense, it could have traveled a kilometer between eggmates.

Once outside, Phoedris is tempted to run, but catches himself, remembering the stormtrooper patrol. Rather, he backtracks several blocks, toward the Rebel hideout, nervously clutching his blaster... just in case.

Suddenly, a blaster shot beams from the shadows and catches Phoedris on the shoulder. If it were not for his flowing cloak, the shot would likely have landed in the center of his chest. The pain is still excruciating as Phoedris turns, expecting more fire. Instead, he is tackled and wrestled to the ground by his attacker—Cypher.

WHAT'S ROLEPLAYING?

A roleplaying game is "let's pretend, with rules." Each person plays his/her own *Star Wars* hero (a character): a Rebel pilot, a smuggler, a bounty hunter or even a Jedi apprentice. One player is the gamemaster. Instead of playing a character, the gamemaster is the storyteller. He comes up with the adventure idea, describes the scenes of the story to the players and then they decide what their characters are going to do. The players imagine what is going on around them and have their characters react to situations, but there's no script. The players simply try whatever they can imagine. For details, read the *Star Wars* roleplaying game sourcebooks from West End Games.

The air crackles with energy as the eggmates struggle, physically and mentally.

"I hope you understand, brother, that your death will serve a greater cause," Cypher shouts telepathically. "The Rebel dogs will never suspect that I have taken your place among them."

Both eggmates feel the excruciating pain of Phoedris' wound as they fight, but Cypher has planned well. "I have prepared for this with cybematics," he tells his dying brother. "The

wound is a mere tingle to me, while it bleeds you of your life." The struggle is short. As Phoedris' lifeless body slides to the ground, Cypher unemotionally rips his eggmate's cloak free and fastens it around himself. He also possesses all of Phoedris' knowledge, skills and memories—including the secret location of his Rebel hideout. Still, there is one element missing from his plan to single-handedly bring down the Rebellion as Cypher heads toward the hideout.

He noiselessly enters through a secret doorway into the heart of the Rebel Alliance's intelligence headquarters on Ord Mantell. His motions set off a humming sensor, alerting the two Rebels in the dimly lit room ahead. Not wanting to alarm them, Cypher quickly steps into the light and draws back his hood. "I have the information we need regarding the Imperial shipment," he says. "There should be more than enough credits onboard to pay for the Hoth base." With all of his eggmate's memories, Cypher continues to recite the details of the mission.

A moment later, the sensor hums again as Baajik enters the hideout. He immediately sees the Nalrithian, although he is not fooled by the mere change of clothing. His heightened senses tell him that this is not Phoedris before him. Baajik draws his blaster, but Cypher reacts and fires first, knocking the small bat creature back into the darkness, where he falls into a smoldering heap. With his last gasp, Baajik whimpers, "Cypher Bos..."

"He must have mistaken me for my brother, Cypher Bos, the bounty hunter," the murderer says, laughing to himself as he continues his charade and tries to look concerned. "But Cypher ambushed me on my way here. Fortunately, I blasted him and escaped." ☹

Mike Mikaelian is a freelance artist and writer in New York City.

NALRITHIAN

ATTRIBUTE DICE: 11D. **DEXTERITY** 2D/5D. **KNOWLEDGE** 1D/4D. **MECHANICAL** 1D/4D+1. **PERCEPTION** 1D/3D+2. **STRENGTH** 1D+1/4D+1. **TECHNICAL** 1D/4D

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Body Armor: Nalrithians have a chitinous outer skeleton which provides them with +1D+1 protection from physical damage.

ENHANCED SENSES: Nalrithians have a very acute sense of smell. They receive a +1D bonus to Perception to notice smells and to identify known scents. The gamemaster can make a secret check using Perception +2 to see if the character notices a scent, such as a familiar species or element, to the character.

MINDLINK: All Nalrithians share a special link with their eggmates, which makes them a limited hive society. Usually, eggmates work very closely together, sharing everything, including Force Points. Eggmates can share thoughts, experiences and Force Points voluntarily, or

they can withhold them by passing a Difficult Knowledge check. If an eggmate tries to link to these hidden thoughts or take a Force Point, they must have physical contact and pass a Knowledge check with a higher result. Force Points gained this way can be saved for later use. Mindlink normally has a range of approximately 12 meters, though can be used over longer distances (the mental equivalent of shouting).

RESIST MIND CONTROL: A side effect of their Mindlink ability, Nalrithians have a +1D against any attempt to take control of their minds. If the Nalrithians are currently Mindlinked, use the highest resistance among the group and add +1D per Nalrithian.

TELEPATHY: Nalrithians communicate using a combination of scents and electromagnetic field manipulation. Devices that affect energy fields have no effect on Nalrithians, unless they are within 10 meters of the character. Generally, Nalrithians can only communicate with their own species and others who use scents and electromagnetic fields. Each

species, however, usually has its own language, which must be learned as such.

STORY FACTORS: Xenophobia: The Nalrithians are feared by many other species due to their close resemblance to insects. Average civilians generally avoid Nalrithians because of their appearance. As a result, most Nalrithians are bitter toward all other species, often choosing not to associate with them. Nalrithians, in general, neither trust nor are trusted.

MOVE: 8/11

SIZE: 1.2-1.6 meters tall

CAPSULE: Nalrithians are an insectoid species from an unknown system in the Outer Rim Territories. Little information is available about their societies or customs. They do not speak their own language, but communicate telepathically among themselves. Although it is unknown whether Nalrithians have any gender, it is assumed that they resemble insects in that regard. Several Nalrithians share one egg before birth, and those eggmates have a special telepathic link that can allow them to share thoughts and memories.

IN A NEW BOOK, RALPH MCQUARRIE REVISITS THE STAR W

Another Spin Around THE GALAXY



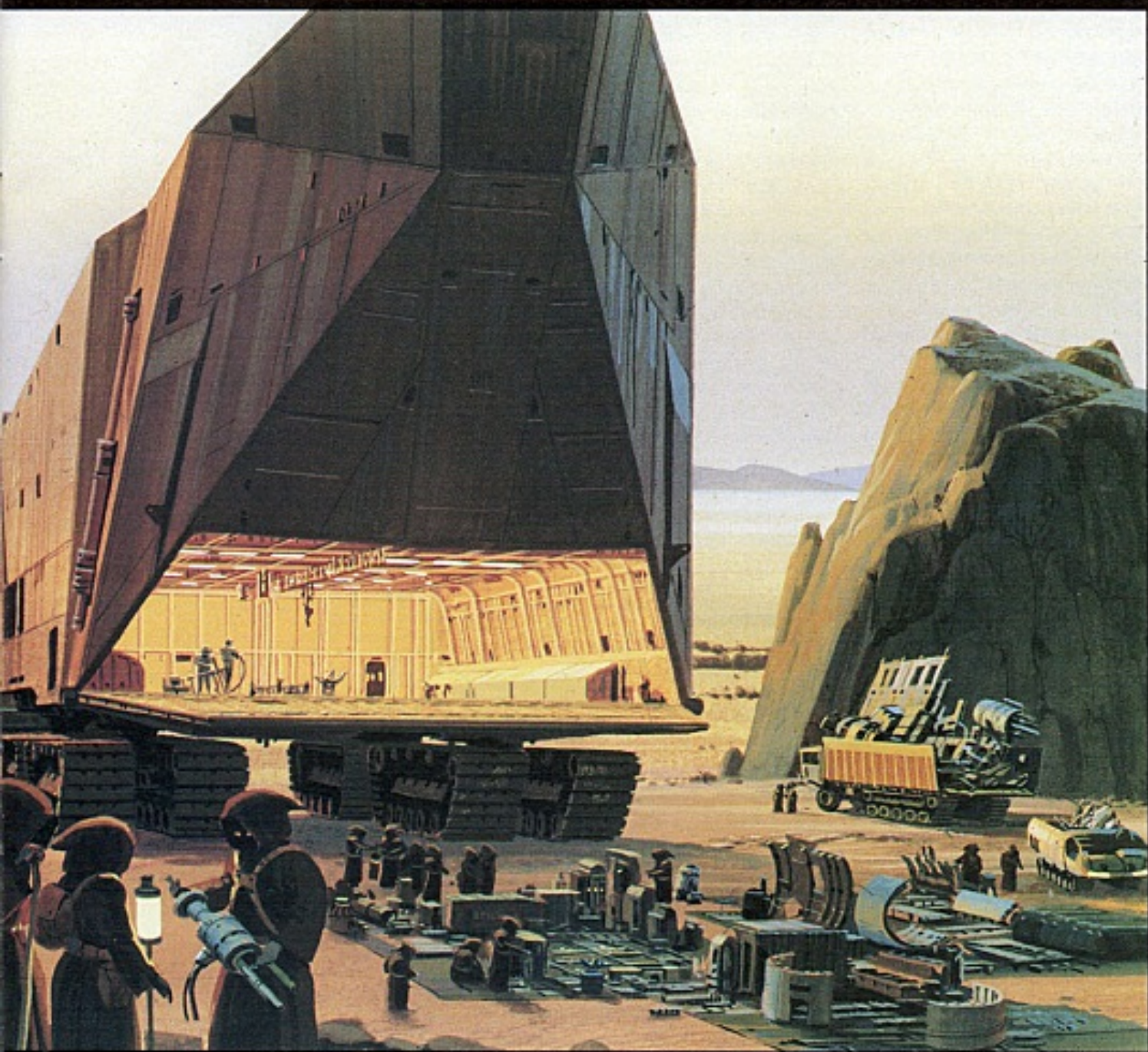
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hat was life like on Alderaan before it was blown into space dust? What was involved in building the secret Rebel base on Hoth? What sort of exotic flying creatures inhabit Bespin? And who better to visualize those or any other beings, places or things in the *STAR WARS* universe than Ralph McQuarrie?

That's just what the legendary film production painter has done in a glorious new 208-page book from Bantam—*The Illustrated STAR WARS Universe*. Along with 125 McQuarrie images, the project also boasts equally imaginative essays by *STAR WARS* novelist and editor Kevin J. Anderson.

More than just a collection of magnificent artwork, *Universe* emerges as a unique melding of the past, present and future of its subject. McQuarrie, the concept artist on all three *STAR WARS* films, has created 25 brand-new paintings, many containing familiar

AMONG THE
NEW IMAGES
FROM MCQUARRIE'S BUSY
DRAWING
TABLE IS THIS
SCENE OF THE
JAWAS' ANNU-
AL SWAP MEET
ON TATOOINE.



"faces" and species irresistibly cast in unfamiliar situations. For example, McQuarrie has illustrated a herd of wild tauntauns grazing on lichen growths, deep in the ice cave grottoes of Hoth. *National Geographic* couldn't have done it better.

Supporting and, in many cases, inspiring this new material are numerous preexisting sketches by McQuarrie and other Lucasfilm production artists, including Joe Johnston and Nilo Rodis Jaramero. "We tried to make it seamless, to extend George Lucas' original vision for the films into this book," explains McQuarrie. "The style I had established for *STAR WARS* was ideal. I'm so used to working in the [horizontal] 'Panavision' format, I figured we could just continue that for the most part." There are a couple of notable exceptions: the monstrous wampa and the ferocious krayt dragon

CORUSCANT

In the words of Pollux Hax, the Emperor's chief propagandist: "After many thousands of years of constant construction and expansion, Coruscant's entire planetary surface has been covered with layer upon layer of buildings, like crystalline growths on a rock. Portions of the unending city have been rebuilt, demolished and rebuilt again over the centuries. As part of the Emperor's new efficiency programs, not a square meter of space is wasted, and the people are happier than before."

"The rooftop of virtually any building offers a truly breathtaking view unparalleled on any other

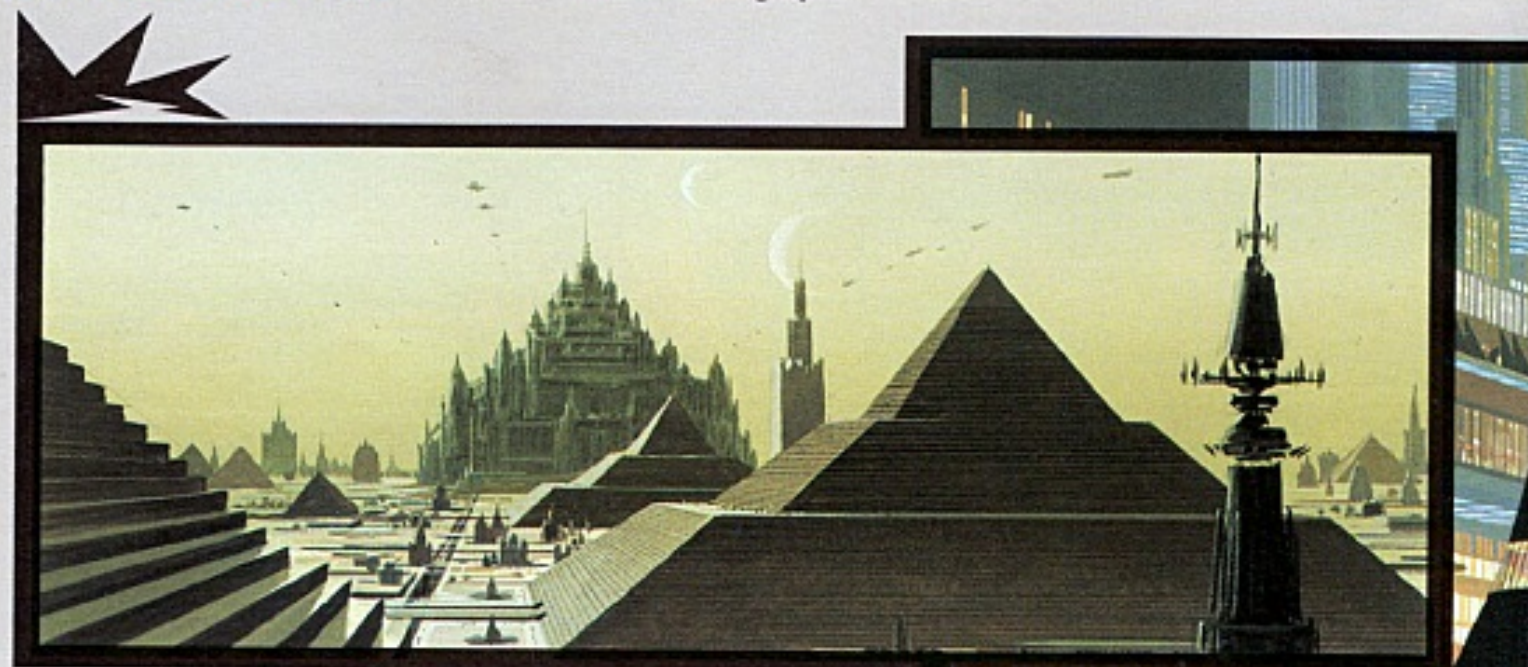
are square-shaped paintings, though no less breathtaking.

The book is structured as a planetary guide, with eight distinctive worlds given the McQuarrie/Anderson treatment: Tatooine, Coruscant, Bespin, Dagobah, Endor, Hoth, Yavin 4 and Princess Leia's now-shattered home planet, Alderaan. You're taken on each tour by a different guide. For example, the planet Coruscant—called Imperial Center since the Empire took over—is described by Pollux Hax, an advisor to the Emperor himself.

"I looked at the list of planets, then started to do a little tour in my mind, imagining what might be interesting," recalls McQuarrie from his studio in northern California. "I wondered how a Jawa village would look. Alderaan was a whole new place, where I could do almost anything, really. Most of the planets had been pretty well-traveled during the course of the three films."

To assure authenticity and creative harmony, McQuarrie and Anderson met during the early stages of the project to discuss just about everything. "There are tons of things in the *STAR WARS* saga that I don't know about," McQuarrie admits. "But Kevin's an expert. He researched everything he could and went through all the stuff that had been written or said about these places. I pinpointed the things I wanted to illustrate, then Kevin made outlines based on our talks. Months and months went by, and as I was completing my illustrations, Kevin was taking flights of fancy with his text".

Of course, George Lucas had to approve everything the two creators were dreaming up.



world. Towering skyscrapers, built of transparisteel and smoked duracrete, stretch to the horizon like a great forest of structures built by hundreds of different architects, both human and alien. The city dazzles the imagination, and has rightfully been the subject of much poetry

ABOVE: THE IMPERIAL PALACE IS THE LARGEST STRUCTURE ON CORUSCANT. RIGHT: THE CITY IS RE-OWNED FOR ITS NIGHT LIFE.



"Generally, I did a series of thumbnail sketches," says McQuarrie, explaining the approval process. "Every concept, every character design had to be looked at by George. As a matter of fact, I have a notebook filled with roughs with George's 'OK' written on them. It was the same way when we were doing the movies."

Once in a while, Lucas would nix an idea that appealed to McQuarrie. For instance, McQuarrie says, "I wanted to do something with the Ice Castle on Hoth. It was an idea that George once had, and by sheer coincidence, it was the first illustration I did for *The Empire Strikes Back*. But after thinking about it, George insisted that Hoth was a place where there were no castles or previous habitats of any kind; it was a bleak, unpopulated planet. I was sorry to see the castle go, but because it was inconsistent with the mythology he was creating, that was that."

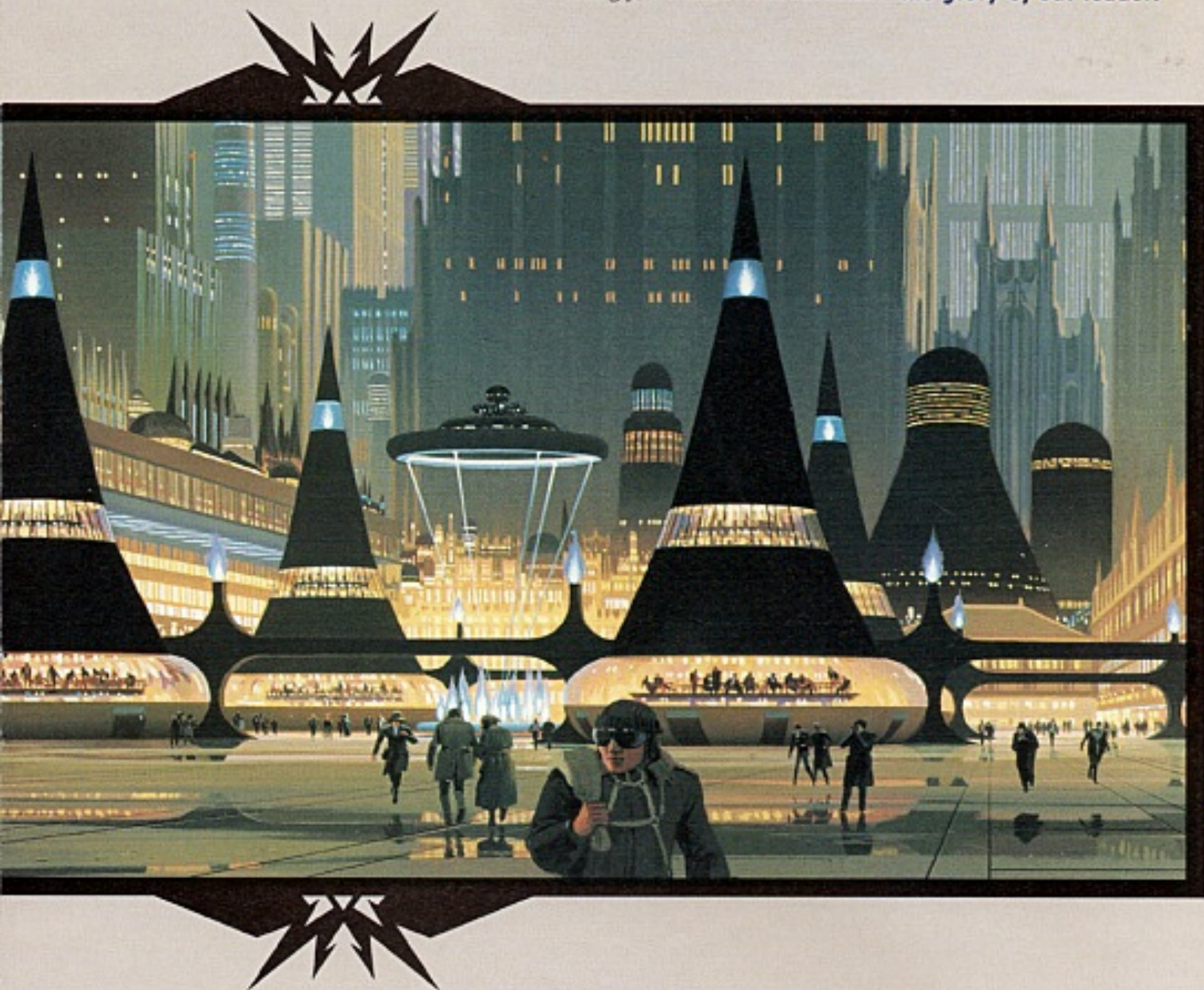
One of the artist's favorite paintings was conceived for the Endor chapter. "The Gorax giants were introduced in *The Ewok Adventure*, with

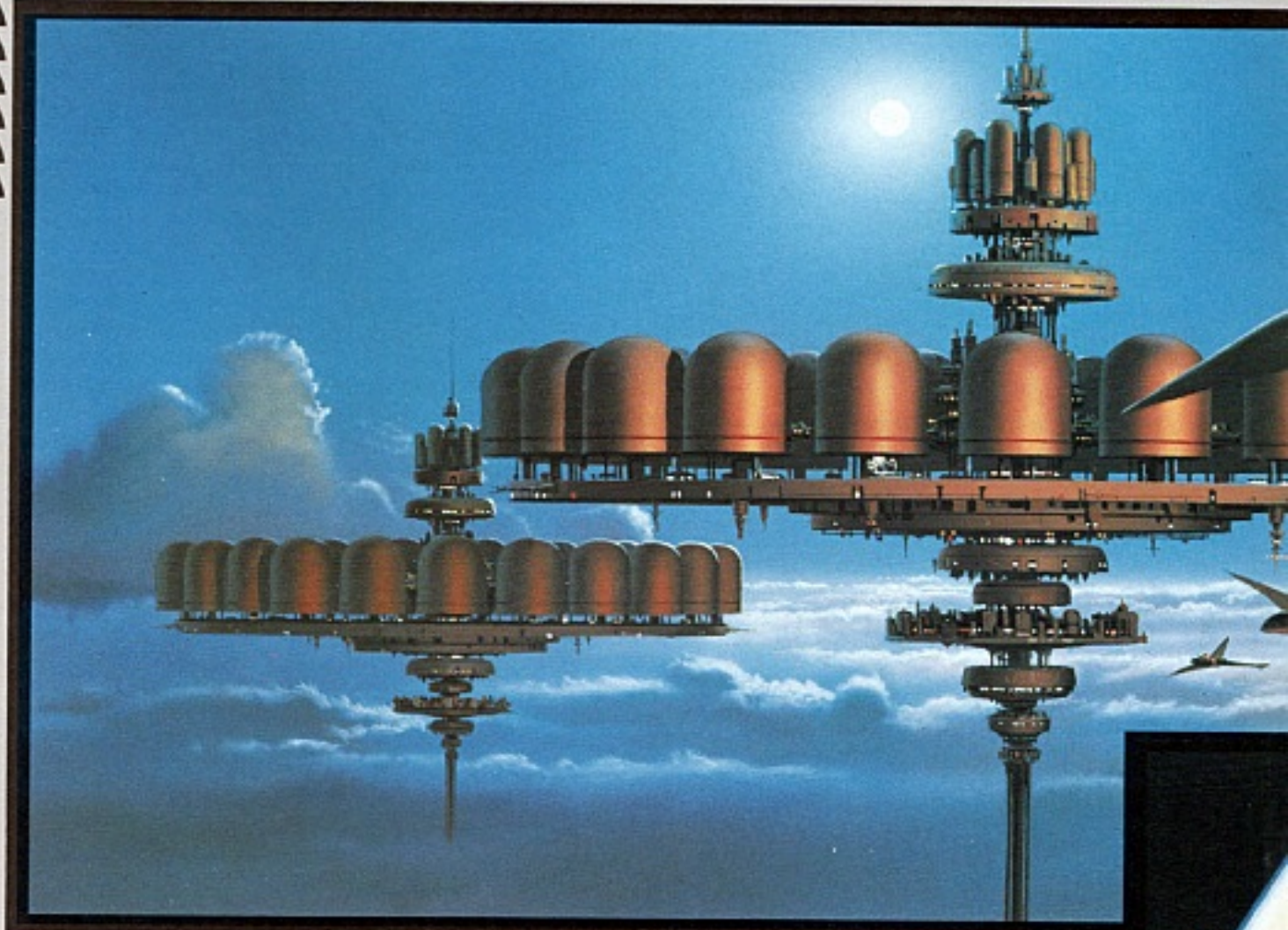
which I wasn't involved at all," says McQuarrie. "I had no idea what Goraxes were about, what kind of 'back story' might have been created for them. I just thought it would make a striking illustration—this giant creature comes to visit the Ewok village and peers over one of the old tree-house platforms. I couldn't pass that up!"

Creating Alderaan offered a different challenge, as well as an opportunity. "It was blown up in the original *STAR WARS* by Grand Moff Tarkin and the Death Star," McQuarrie reminds us, "but we saw it happen from outer space. That gave us complete creative freedom to envision what the planet's surface looked like, its vegetation, its cityscapes. Interestingly, we discovered sketches

and music commissioned by the Emperor himself....

"The most prominent building on the face of Coruscant, indeed the centerpiece of the entire gleaming city, is the Imperial Palace. The Palace stands like a hybrid cathedral and pyramid, rising higher than any other structure on the planet. Its tallest spires reach up into the rarefied atmosphere, occasionally sparking discharges from the hovering aurorae in the sky. Made of polished gray-green rock and mirrored crystals, the home of Emperor Palpatine sparkles in the hazy sunlight, a fitting example of the glory of our leader."





BESPIN

In the words of Cloud City Councilman Po Ruddle

Lingsnöt: "The legendary Lord Ecclessis Figg, well-known Corellian explorer and investor, discovered a pleasant surprise on his inspection of supposedly unremarkable Bespin: large concentrations of pure Tibanna gas lay in the upper atmosphere. Tibanna gas has long been treasured as a hyperdrive coolant; no better substance has ever been found to serve this purpose, and thus it has been widely sought after by entrepreneurs in every sector....

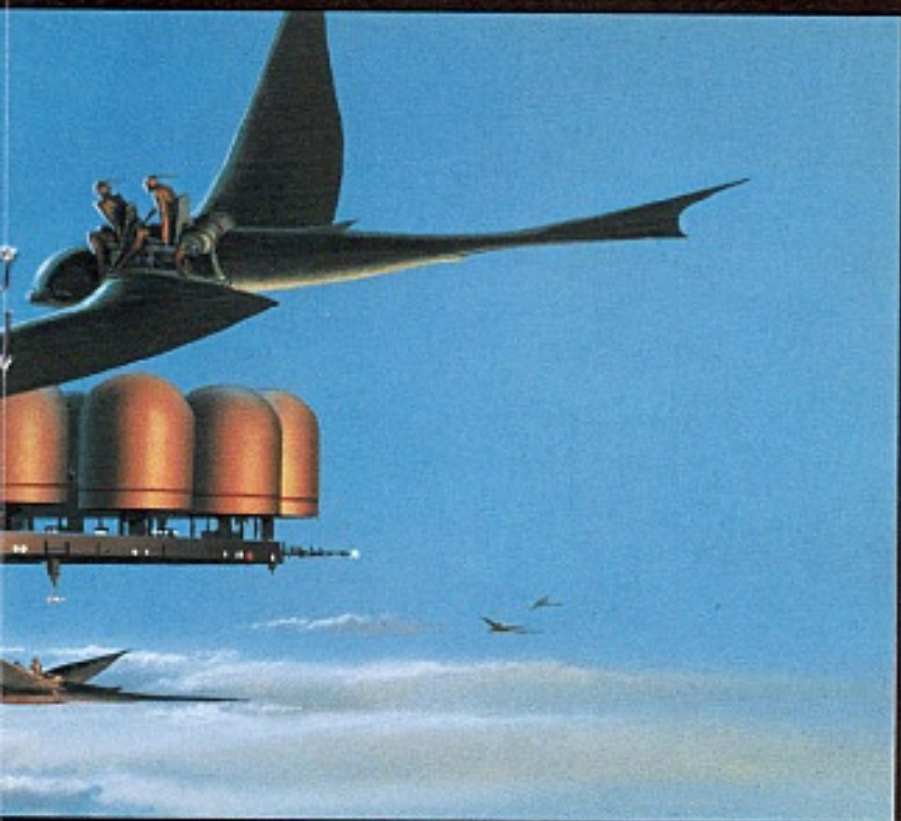
"Being a shrewd businessman, Figg saw his

we had done for one of the movies that depicted a planet possibly intended as a Rebel stronghold—a tranquil planet, with endless grassy plains and huge beehive structures. It would be used by the Rebels as a kind of hideout. That wound up becoming the basis of our book's Alderaan, which Kevin envisioned as a world where artists and poets worked in harmony with nature."

As enthused as he is now about the book, McQuarrie wasn't too thrilled when he was first approached a couple years ago by Lucy Autrey Wilson, Lucasfilm's director of publishing. "I told Lucy that I wasn't sure I could get back into this sort of thing," he recalls. "She understood, and waited for me to make up my mind. I finally reminded myself that the most interesting time I'd had in my career was working on *STAR WARS*, and that it would be fun if they'd let me fool around with any idea I wanted—which was pretty much what I did with this book."

Luckily for all *STAR WARS* fans, McQuarrie's getting back into it extends beyond this project, as he's recently illustrated two *STAR WARS* pop-up books, which include such fantastic depictions as Jabba the Hutt's palace and the cantina on Mos Eisley. Even more exciting is McQuarrie's news that he'll be working with Lucas on all three prequels.

"I have a good feeling for scale, contrasting tiny figures against huge backgrounds," the illustrator says. "My sense of perspective is



LEFT: TIBANNA GAS REFINERIES PROCESS AND STORE THE VALUABLE SUBSTANCE ON WHICH BESPIN'S ECONOMY DEPENDS. BELOW: GIANT HABITATION SPHERES BEING CONSTRUCTED OVER CORUSCANT.

chance to become enormously rich—if he could pull his scheme off. With his flamboyant personality, Figg wooed and then married a lesser noble from the Royal House of Alderaan; she made her private fortune available to him and his eccentric pursuits. His previous ventures had been marginally successful in various parts of the galaxy, but finally he paid her back ten times over with his fabulously successful gas mining facilities on Bespin...

"Riding the wind currents around the planet, numerous airborne mining installations were constructed—floating auto-



also very dramatic, which is perfect for a concept like *STAR WARS*. I guess that's why George keeps using me."

For McQuarrie, creating imaginative vistas for *STAR WARS* book projects is very similar to his motion-picture work. "For film, you sometimes have to be more aware of lighting and visual consistency with the live-action elements," he says. "But ultimately, it comes to the same thing: Is it an interesting subject? Does the illustration move you? As the artist, I have to get excited about what I'm doing, and translate that excitement to the viewer. With *STAR WARS*, I was inspired from day one." ☺

mated refineries, storage tanks bobbing above the clouds, and skimmer facilities to scoop gases from different levels of Bespin's cloud banks."

— Excerpts from Kevin J. Anderson's text.

STAR WARS

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CHARACTERS

THE ONLY DETAILED, ILLUSTRATED,
COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE
TO THE MAJOR AND MINOR
CHARACTERS OF THE
STAR WARS UNIVERSE!

THE COVER OF
THE GUIDE WAS
DESIGNED BY
SYLVAIN
MICHAELIS,
USING A COM-
PILATION OF
STAR WARS
ART. INTERIOR
ART IS BY
MICHAEL
BUTKUS.

ANDY MANGELS

101 STAR WARS

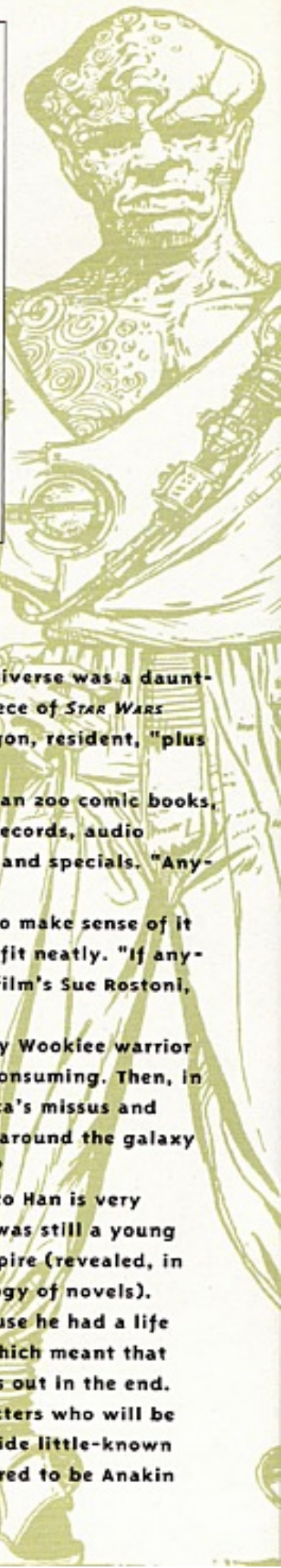
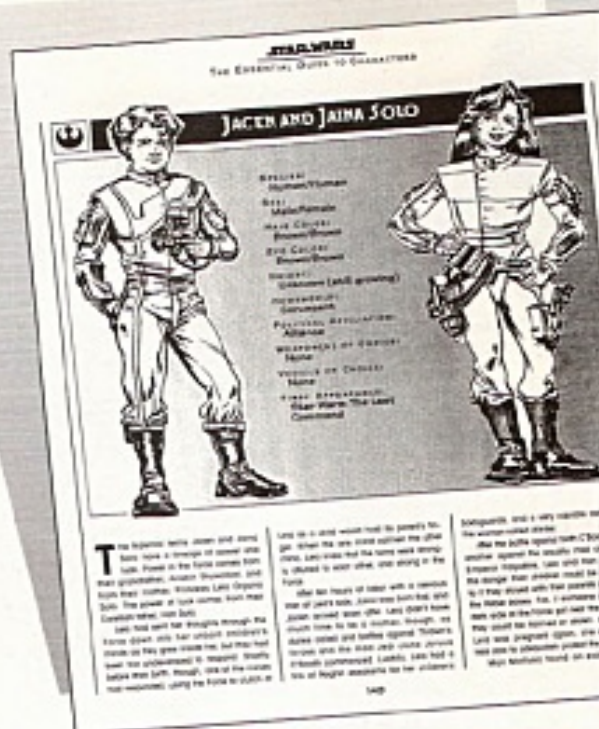
*Looking for a well-taught course
all about the important inhabitants of the trilogy?
Check out The Essential Guide to Characters*

Even the hardest-core *STAR WARS* fans might have a tough time identifying the 101 most important characters who inhabit not only the three movies, but also the novels, comics, game sourcebooks, cartoons, TV specials and other media where the saga has resided over the past 18 years. But now, thanks to the diligence of trilogy buff Andy Mangels and Del Rey Books—writer and publisher, respectively, of *The Essential Guide to Characters*—everyone can have the whole wide *STAR WARS* world in their hands.

Entering the galaxy in November, *The Essential Guide* is just what it's billed to be: 224 pages filled with detailed descriptions, illustrations and photos of every key *STAR WARS* character, from Admiral Ackbar to Zuckuss. There are the obvious choices—Luke, Leia, Han, Darth, the Emperor, Boba—as well as some that many fans have never encountered, such as Rillao, Gaeriel Captison, Prince Isolder and Het Nkik. There are scattered facts about familiar characters, neatly assembled in this one handy compendium. Did you know that Chewbacca had a nephew named Lowbacca? Or that Lobot, Lando's right-hand cyborg/man, was formerly a slave? How many of you can name the tune that Oola danced to at Jabba's command?

Now, before you ask whether you really need know that Max Rebo's jizz-walling combo was playing "Lapti Nek" when Oola undulated for the blubbery Hutt, be assured that *The Essential Guide* is filled with as much fun as fact. This is an ideal resource for anyone interested in learning all they need to know about George Lucas' wondrous space opera and its multitude of intriguing personalities.

"You don't have to be a geek fan to enjoy the book," says Mangels, who may not be a geek but sure has been a die-hard fan and collector since he saw *STAR WARS* at age 10 when it first hit the big screen. "You can read it as an interesting Who's Who book."



Deciding who and what to cover in the ever-widening *Star Wars* universe was a daunting task for Mangels. "The book contains references to every piece of *Star Wars* fiction—written, broadcast and filmed," says the Portland, Oregon, resident, "plus material from the radio plays and magazine articles."

So, besides the three movies, Mangels had to pore through more than 200 comic books, 130 game books, 23 novels (including ones not yet published), records, audio books, poster books, children's books, and TV movies, cartoons and specials. "Anything and everything," says the author, catching his breath.

Along with tracking down hundreds of sources, Mangels also had to make sense of it all, ensuring that the continuity from one reference to the next fit neatly. "If anything didn't make sense, it was my task, with the help of Lucasfilm's Sue Rostoni, to make it make sense."

Take Chewie, for example. In *A New Hope*, we meet this giant, furry Wookiee warrior who's faithfulness to Han Solo over the last few decades is all-consuming. Then, in the 1978 *Star Wars* Holiday Special on CBS-TV, we meet Chewbacca's missus and kids... and perhaps wonder why this guy is always galavanting around the galaxy instead of staying home on Kashyyyk and tending to his family?

Of course, Mangels' research provided the answer. "His 'life debt' to Han is very strong," says Mangels, referring to the fact that Solo, while he was still a young Imperial officer, freed the Wookiee from enslavement by the Empire (revealed, in case you're wondering, in Brian Daley's wonderful Han Solo trilogy of novels). "That overrides Chewbacca's familial responsibilities. But, because he had a life debt to a hero, Han, Chewie's family became an honor family, which meant that other Wookiees had to take care of them." See, everything works out in the end. While Mangels couldn't give away secrets about some of the characters who will be dealt with in the upcoming prequel movies, he was able to provide little-known tidbits and details. For instance, Owen Lars is generally considered to be Anakin

[illegible][illegible]

**TOP: DESIGN
ROUGHS OF
PAGES FROM
THE GUIDE.
BELOW, FROM
LEFT: ANAKIN
SOLO, DORSK
BI, STORM-
TROOPER,
LOBOT.**



Species: **Humanoid**
 Sex: **Male**
 Hair Color: **Blue-black**
 Eye Color: **Red**
 Height: **1.5 meters**
 Weight: **60 kilograms**
 Physical Attributes: **Empire**
 Workplace or Home: **Planetary planet**
 Things or Objects: **Imperial Star Destroyer**
 Citizens:
 First Appearance: **Star Wars: Hair to the Empire**
 Quote: **On second the Chissens after the Death of Arrogant**

The highest-ranking contributor to the highway program was the right, long-planned *Interstate*. But the *Interstate* was not the only highway program that would become one of the New Republic's grandest bequests.

Transportation projects are everywhere, but they don't, like bridge and growing toll roads, come with a lot of controversy. They can't come on too often, but they can come so often that it's impossible to ignore them. Following *Interstate*'s lead, the federal government has been building a network of highways that will connect the entire country. The New Republic is helping to build it.

The program is the largest of its kind in the country. It will build a network of highways that will connect the entire country. The New Republic is helping to build it.

of the 1990s. The most basic indicator of the success of the network is the number of people who have joined it. Two factors affect the distribution of its members. First, those members who are in the best position to benefit from the network, especially those who have the most contacts, tend to be the most successful. And second, the network is most successful in those areas where there is a strong demand for its services. For example, the network is most successful in those areas where there is a strong demand for its services, such as the insurance industry, where it has a strong presence. The network is also successful in those areas where there is a strong demand for its services, such as the insurance industry, where it has a strong presence.

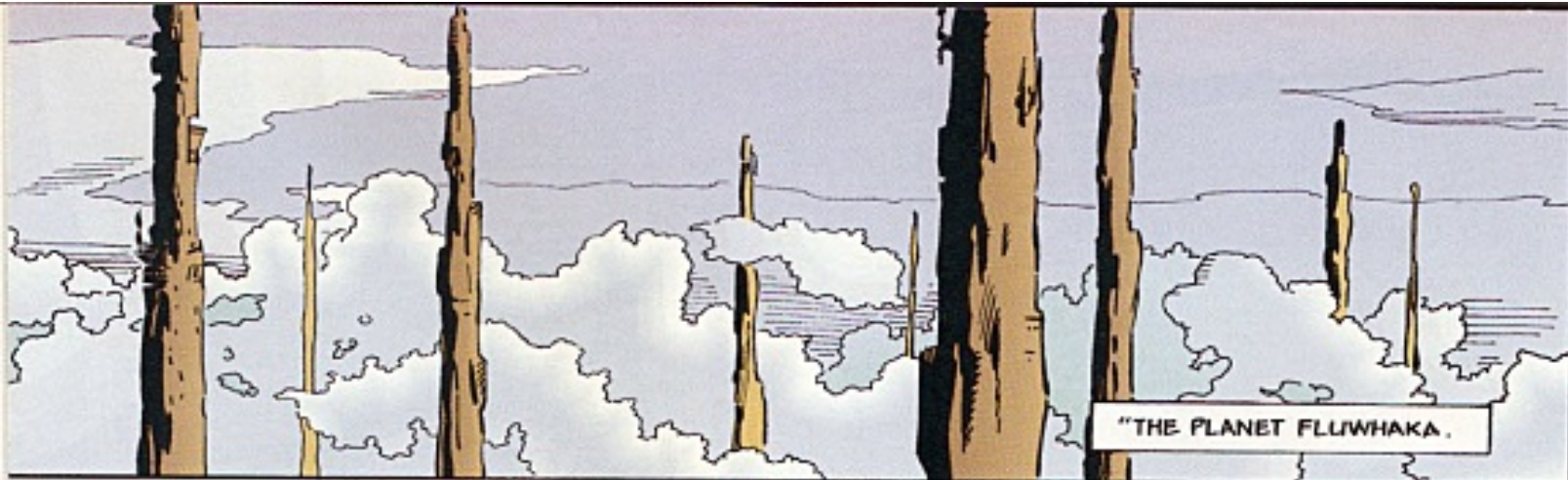
Skywalker's brother, who upon Anakin's "death," took Luke into his home on Tatooine. Yet one of the *STAR WARS* novels later disclosed the truth—that Owen is Ben Kenobi's brother.

Actually, that gem was also provided in Bill Slavicsek's excellent *A Guide to the STAR WARS Universe*, published by Del Rey in 1994. And while that book is an impressive reference—you could call it "essential"—so much has been added to the *STAR WARS* storyline since Slavicsek's research that Mangels' book is a logical, natural and necessary progression. "There's just so much more information from many other sources," Mangels says, including Bantam's most recent hardcover novels, *The Truce at Bakura*, *The Crystal Star* and *Children of the Jedi*.

Another inviting feature of *The Essential Guide* is the format of the entries. The opening page for each character features a head-to-toe, black-and-white illustration by Michael Butkus. Alongside that is a vital statistics breakdown: species, sex, hair and eye color, height, homeworld, political affiliation, weapon(s) of choice, vehicle of choice, first appearance and, if it occurred, final appearance or death. Photos and other artwork appear with many of the characters.

Although *The Essential Guide* is exhaustive in its dogged pursuit of the beings that populate the vast *STAR WARS* world, there's plenty more to know that's not here, namely all the nifty spaceships in which these characters zip around the galaxy. But fear not, for Del Rey will fill that gap this spring with the companion, *The Essential Guide to Vehicles and Vessels*, an equally impressive and complete encyclopedia written by Bill Smith of West End Games.

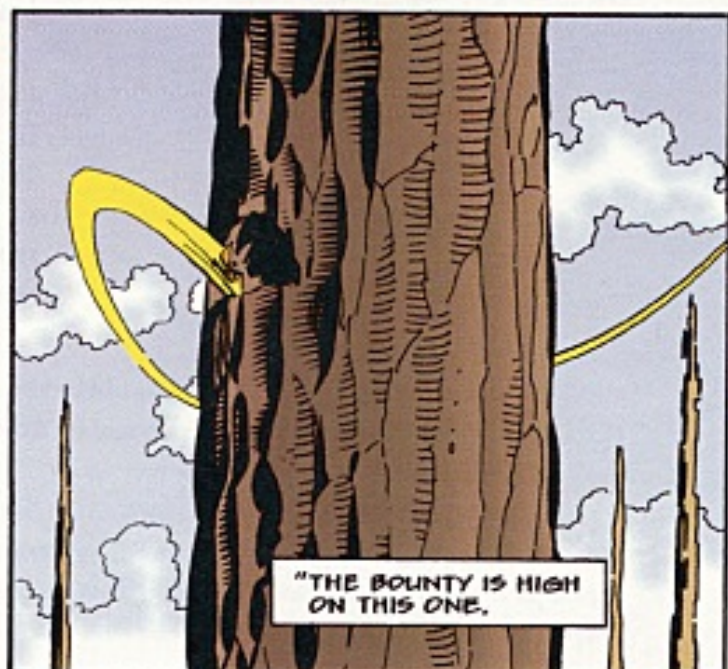
In the meantime, Andy Mangels' head remains very much filled with characters. "I learned even more than I already knew about *STAR WARS*," Mangels the maven confesses. "The amount of trivia in my head right now is scary—and I've already forgotten some of what I wrote!" ☺



"THE PLANET FLUWHAKA."



"THE LAST OF THE PIRATES
HAS ELUDED ME UNTIL NOW."



"THE BOUNTY IS HIGH
ON THIS ONE."



"DENGAR'S BEEN AFTER
ITS HIDE AS WELL."



NOSSTRICK!

I HEARD YOU
WERE THE BEST.



I AM BETTER!



NICE TRY.

STAR WARS™

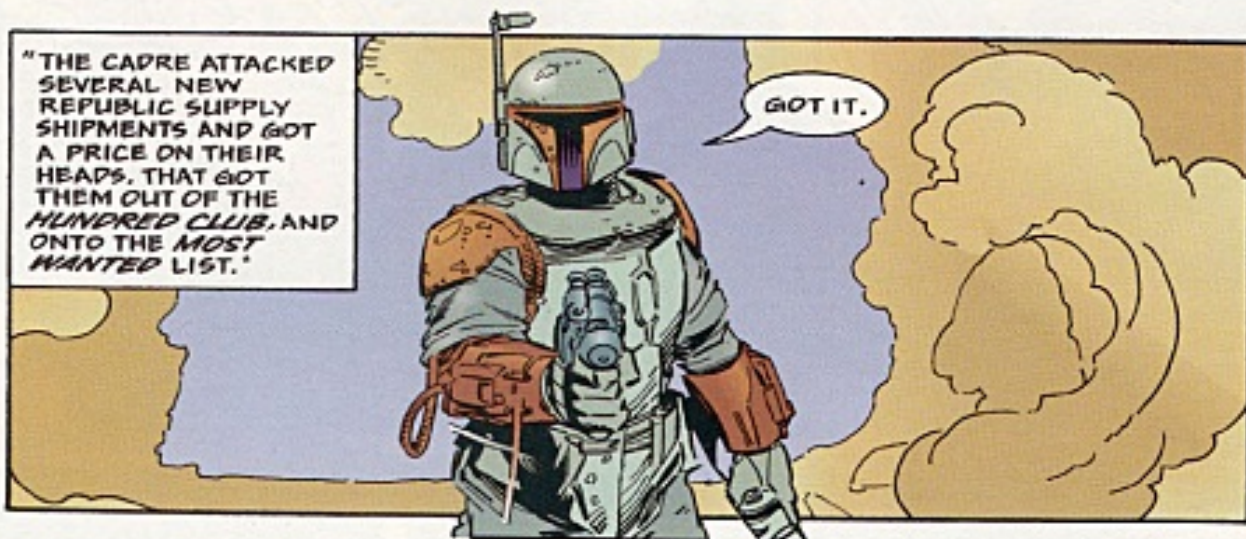
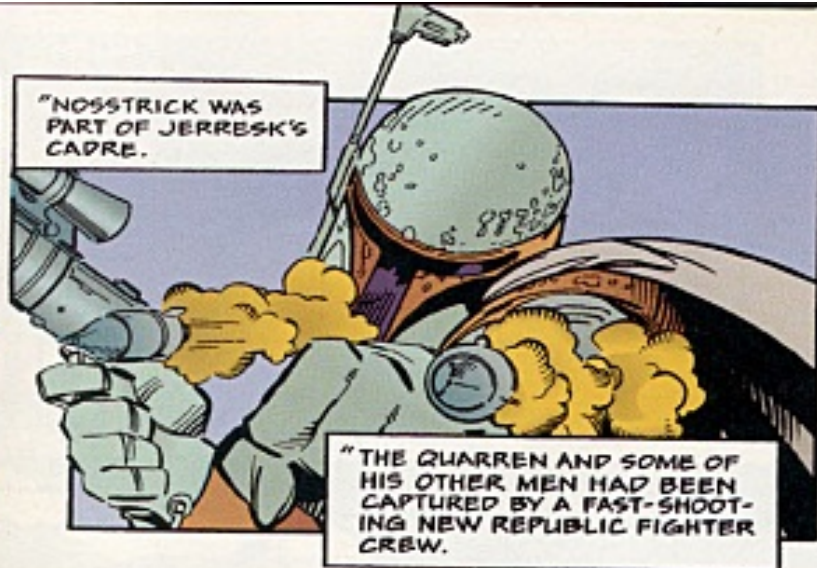
BOBA FETT™

TWIN ENGINES OF DESTRUCTION



script Andy Mangels • pencils John Nadeau • inks Jordi Ensign • lettering Michael Taylor • colors Cary Porter • editing Peet Janes

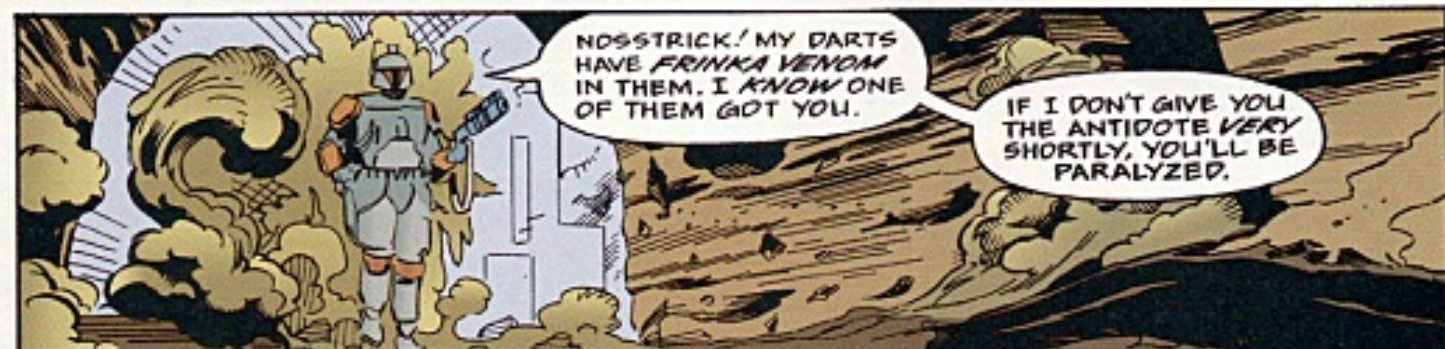
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"I DON'T LIKE
TAKING THE
REBEL
BOUNTIES..."

...BUT A HUNT'S
A HUNT."

PUNT!

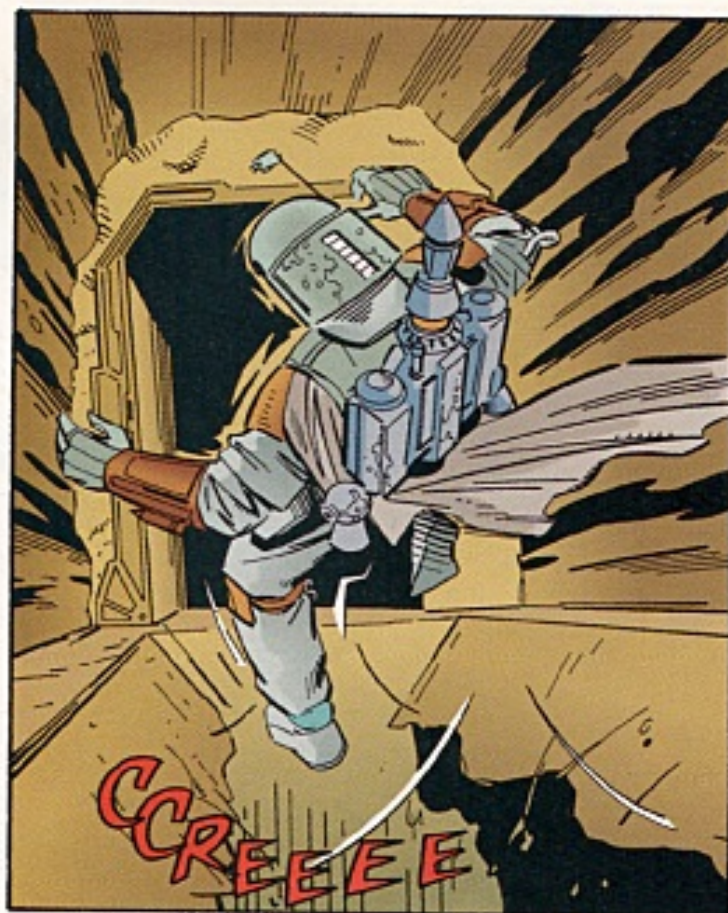


"SO MUCH FOR
REASONING
WITH HIM."



"YOU THINK HE'D KNOW
MY REPUTATION."









SO, YOU
GONNA
SHOOT ME?

ONLY IF YOU
KEEP TALKING.

GET ON YOUR
SKIFF AND GO.

"BAD MOVE ON KAST'S
PART. LETTIN' ME LIVE.



"WHILE I'M
GRATEFUL
HE DIDN'T
KILL ME...



...I'M NOT TOO PARTIAL
TO ANYONE POINTIN' A
BLASTER AT MY HEAD."

"AND SINCE KAST IS TELLIN'
PEOPLE HE'S *BORR FETT*
TO GET THE HIGHER BOUNTIES,
I KNOW SOMEONE *ELSE*
WHO WON'T BE HAPPY."



"AND I'M ONE
OF THE FEW
SENTIENTS
ALIVE WHO
KNOWS HOW
TO CONTACT
HIM."

MESSAGE RECEIVED:

FROM DENGAR

TO SARLACC FOOD—

YOUR "TWIN" SPOTTED
AGAIN, ON FLUWHAKA.

TIME TO DUMP THE GARBAGE.

YOU OWE ME TWO.



III ➔ Dennis Muren, a visual effects cameraman on *STAR WARS*, effects director of photography on *The Empire Strikes Back* and currently ILM's senior visual effects supervisor, is uniquely qualified to cut through the hype surrounding computer-generated moviemaking and survey the emerging frontier. Muren's career has bridged the traditional FX world of motion-control cameras and physical materials to helming such CG-intensive projects as *The Abyss*, *Terminator 2*, *Jurassic Park* and *Casper* (winning eight Oscars along the way). In this exclusive interview, Muren contemplates the brave new world of computer technology.

SWG: HAS COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY CHANGED THE WAY HOLLYWOOD PERCEIVES VISUAL FX?

MUREN: We're a little higher on the food chain now than we used to be; we're not just doing a matte painting or model. With movies like *Casper* we're not doing visual effects anymore, although we're using effects tools. We're doing something that's more the essence of what the film is.

Ty Ellingson [an ILM art director] has thinks it's a renaissance, and it is something like that. You've got a core of people who are still learning how to apply new tools. But it's also a dangerous age for just that reason. The talent pool is so young, so vocal, and everyone is so hyped, and it takes a major leap from that to making an incredible movie. Like when high-speed, 16-millimeter equipment came out, people would go out and try to make a feature film. You can use the technology to make that movie, but it's not going to be as good yet because it first takes time to learn the grammar of film.

SWG: ARE YOU ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE EMERGING DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES?

MUREN: I've never been interested in the process. The technology for me is the means to the end of wonderful images. Fortunately, I work with a lot of people who are heavily into making the technology happen. But you've got to have both groups, one pushing the technology and one with people like me who say, "Push it in this direction." The tools are evolving, getting better and better, and movies will be safer to make. For example, you'll be able to do dangerous practical effects

with actors that were once impossible to do. It'll all be perfectly safe, and the shot will look phenomenal.

What's driving me and other people is that these new technologies tremendously expand your creative forces. It's wonderful. You've almost got to stop limiting yourself, to start fresh. It's become a matter of expanding your mind. A lot of people at ILM, and probably at every effects house, are still making the transition. Some people are still tentative about moving that virtual camera too much, or hesitant about doing a push-in on a digital model, because they're remembering back to the old ways of doing things. But that's changing every year. The more shows you do, the more confident you get. Everybody is understanding it better and pushing themselves, getting more daring. But you can't be wild about it, because then you're making shots that don't fit into movies. Then you should be doing games or CD-ROMs.

SWG: DO YOU THINK THE COMPUTER WILL ULTIMATELY CHANGE THE NATURE OF THE MOVIEGOING EXPERIENCE?

MUREN: Fundamentally, movies are storytelling. I don't think they're simulator rides, that's something else, or CD-ROMs, that's something again. People want to spend a couple of hours being told a story. But not many people know how to work in a creative environment with a team of people to tell a story that flows effortlessly when it's viewed in a theater.

SWG: WHY IS THERE THIS FASCINATION WITH DIGITAL EFFECTS, AS OPPOSED TO MOTION-CONTROL CAMERA SYSTEMS AND OTHER TRADITIONAL TOOLS?

MUREN: I think it's as subliminal as all of us growing up looking at flickering images on TV screens. You walk into an electronics store and that wall of monitors going just grabs your eye. Now, you can sit down in front of a computer and make an image of your own that looks amazing. So there's this fascination as well as potential. Now you have people working with computers who realize they could have been working on *Jurassic Park*, so they get excited.

digital pioneers

**Dennis Muren,
Industrial Light & Magic's
senior visual effects supervisor,
is carefully forging into computerized
moviemaking**

BY MARK COTTA VAZ



SWGM: WHAT ABOUT ACTORS BEING PLACED INTO SYNTHETIC ENVIRONMENTS? ARE DIGITAL BACKLOTS FEASIBLE NOW?

MUREN: Yes, you just have to build the digital set, and that's going to take a while. But is it going to cost more than building a conventional set? Is it worth it? I think there's a place for using a digital set to get your vista shots and save on production costs, much the way matte paintings and miniatures have been used for 80 years. But the digital sets will be better because they'll look real. There will still be sets built, with digital ones for shots that can't be done any other way. You'll have the best of both worlds.

But I'm a little sensitive to all the hype about making an entire movie using a digital backlot. I think there'd be difficulties with actors and directors working in front of a blue screen, day after day and month after month. When you get into scenes that require real performance and inspiration, you want a real set for everybody to respond to. I think my generation of directors gets its inspiration from their environment. The cameramen certainly do. You take from what you see, and that contributes to the whole.

With the all-digital backlot scenario, you'll also have situations such as live-action camera crews having to figure out how to light actors in front of a blue screen to match background elements they haven't even seen yet. You could do it for 50 or 150 shots—we do

your close-ups and medium shots in a CG set, even doing all the tricks to cut the size of the model down, such as texture mapping [digitally applying surface textures from one image to another], you'll still need a lot of detail. So you could have sections of a film done in CG, but when all is said and done, I'd be surprised if it looks wonderful.

For many years it's going to look like you're seeing layered pieces of film, because of what it takes to juggle the different steps necessary for creating hundreds of shots in a CG environment. But maybe another generation of filmmakers will just go in accepting that movies are layered, so there'll be people who make the layered-look movies. That'll be interesting, all

sorts of collages. And there'll be people able to marry the layers so it looks like you're watching *Lawrence of Arabia*, but it'll have been created digitally. But that's another mind-set. I sure couldn't do anything like that.

SWGM: WHAT ABOUT CREATING A COMPUTER-GENERATED HUMAN? WHAT'S THE ATTRACTION?

MUREN: Some say it's because man has this urge to duplicate himself. Actually, if you have both a synthetic actor and environment, if the whole world's digital, then everything's going through one person's mind, which might actually be better than compositing actors into a digital backlot set.

SWGM: ACTUALLY, THE PERFORMANCE ANIMATION WORK YOU AND ILM DID WITH THE CG GHOSTS ON *CASPER* SEEMS TO BE CLOSER TO THE DREAM OF SYNTHETIC ACTORS.

MUREN: That was an enormous stretch beyond anything we'd ever done before in CG. We had like 6 1/2 minutes of character animation in *Jurassic Park* and more than 40 minutes on *Casper*. And with *Casper*, five shots into it you shouldn't be thinking it's a special effect. That'd be too distracting. The whole point of it was the performances, and they all had to read instantly.

My theory is, if you turn the sound off and look at the shot, do you feel what the character's feeling? Animators on *Casper* spent anywhere from two weeks to six or more weeks on just one shot. There were some shots of *Casper* that ran well over a minute, with the character having to go through 20 facial changes and five different attitudes. Animators are artists, but you can see they're still struggling with a tool, trying to get what they want.

that all the time in visual effects—but when you talk about marrying elements throughout a 2,000-shot feature, it becomes a logistical question of how to keep that together so it all looks good on screen. People have never had to do that before, with that number of shots.

SWGM: THERE'S TALK OF CREATING AN ALL-DIGITAL FEATURE.

MUREN: I think all of this stuff can be done, it just ultimately depends on the mind-set of the people doing it. But if you're going to do all

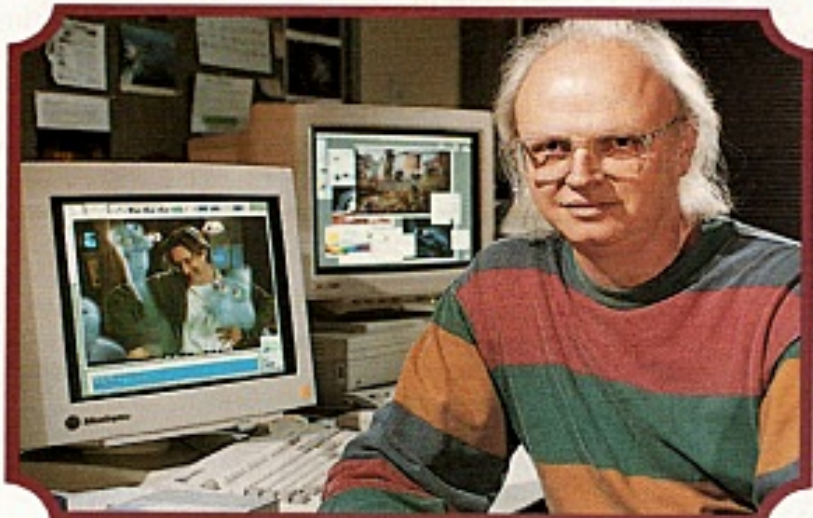
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MUREN RIGS A MOTION-CONTROL SET-UP WITH A WALKER MODEL FOR THE BATTLE OF ENDOR SCENES IN *RETURN OF THE JEDI*.

SWGM: ISN'T IT SOMETHING OF A CONCEIT, THIS OTHER IDEA OF BRINGING BACK AN ACTOR LIKE HUMPHREY BOGART?

MUREN: Yes, that's right. You *could* get a terrific actor—get him make-up, a voice coach—and do the most amazing Humphrey Bogart movie ever. But they'll never do that, because it's still an actor. Somehow, the computer has this god-like character related to it when, in fact, it's just people doing it. I think the most exciting prospect for the future is not so much seeing Bogart or Marilyn Monroe done with the computer, but seeing things you've never seen before, that couldn't be done without a computer. That's what we are using it for.



SWGM: IS IT THE PEOPLE DOING THE WORK AS OPPOSED TO THE TECHNOLOGY?

MUREN: There's this idea that in 10 to 15 years, when everybody has the same computer technology, everything will be equal. But not all movies will be the same at that point. If everything is equalized, all you have to fall back on is your talent. Maybe a technology like digital compositing gets rid of matte lines and there are no more bad comps, but if the shot itself isn't designed right, it won't look good. So what did the digital tool do for you? It's not the tool. It's having a good person design the shot from the beginning.

Another way this stacks up is motion capture from actors [in which living creatures outfitted with special encoders, linking them to a computer, can translate their movements into a CG figure], which is being touted as the save-all of character anima-

tion. People think they'll motion capture a dog, or use human motion to animate horses, dragons and other non-human creatures. Yes, you can get the movement, and the technical people will be thrilled, but the artists who are looking at it will know that those motions don't fit the shape.

Maybe eventually we'll get it to work, but right now you'll get a better performance out of a good animator than getting motion capture from a dog. In fact, we tried motion capture on one of the shots in *Casper*, with a real good mime doing the performance and rehearsals with director Brad Silberling. This was after the show had gone from 20 minutes of CG shots to 40 minutes, so I was trying to make it work. The motion capture work didn't look as good as the animation. We tried to finesse the motion capture performance, but then it wasn't pure anymore, the animator was trying to modify something that wasn't him. So we went back and redid it, animating it in less time than it took for the motion capture and the finessing.

SWGM: IT'S LIKE IN *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*, THE 1939 FLEISCHER STUDIOS CARTOON FEATURE, WHERE THEY ROTOSCOPED AN ACTOR FOR GULLIVER, WHO STANDS APART FROM THE HAND-DRAWN CARTOON CHARACTERS.

MUREN: Rotoscope was used in *Sleeping Beauty*, too. You can just tell it's different. Now, motion

capture won't be like Rotoscopes in a cartoon, because it's going to look real. But the motions aren't going to be what they could have been.

SWGM: WHAT ABOUT THE NEW GENERATION OF EFFECTS ARTISTS WHO HAVE GROWN UP BUILDING THINGS IN A COMPUTER BUT NOT IN REAL LIFE, OR TRY TO DUPLICATE AN ENVIRONMENT THEY'VE ONLY EXPERIENCED ON A TV SCREEN? WILL LACK OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE BE A PROBLEM IN TRYING TO CREATE REALISTIC CG IMAGES?

MUREN: That's why we have art directors, designers and people like me, to remind them what the real world's like. A George Lucas or Stanley Kubrick will see if something doesn't look right, and say, "We're not making a cyber-movie here."

SWGM: HOW ABOUT THE UPCOMING *STAR WARS* FILMS? DO YOU THINK THE COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY WILL BE USED TO EMULATE LUCAS' ORIGINAL CONCEPT OF THE "USED" UNIVERSE?

MUREN: It all depends on where George is going to take the next series of films. If he's going to take it to a chromium look, then you don't need the used approach. But because the used universe is the way the world is anyway, I think that's the way the new films will be. But [George] hasn't talked about that yet. The applications change with each film. A *STAR WARS* film will have a completely different look than another type of movie. The effects always have to look like they fit into the particular movie. Everything has to look like it's out of the same world.

SWGM: WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AS FAR AS DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES?

MUREN: I don't see any big breakthroughs. But things will continue to get better and faster, there will be digital sets, and performance character things. I'm looking for the next big, knockout movie, where ideas are right for the tools. We don't just need new technologies, but more David Leans, more Kubricks, more Lucases. Once the digital PR and press hysteria clears out, movies will go back to the way movies used to be, when it was all about content. It was what the director did with a script, how an actor performed, what effects artists did with their technological tools. And that's the way it ought to be. ☺

Mark Cotta Vaz is a regular contributor to SWGM

► Fans of the *STAR WARS* movies aren't the only ones demanding the next installment of their favorite adventure. Gamers who wore out their joysticks playing *Rebel Assault* have been clamoring for a sequel, too. But while George Lucas' next trilogy is still more than two years away, gamers can start warming up their CD-ROM drives right now. *Rebel Assault II*, which presents an all-new confrontation between Rebel hero Rookie One and the Empire, is scheduled for release by LucasArts later this year.

When the original *Rebel Assault* was introduced in late 1993, it was a breakthrough title. Multimedia computers outfitted with CD-ROM drives and sound cards were just taking off, and the *STAR WARS*-inspired action-arcade title—with its full-screen graphics, incredibly fast first-person gameplay, full-voice and John Williams soundtrack—pushed the new computers to their limits with plenty of thrills, bells and whistles. What LucasArts Entertainment essentially began as an R&D project, to see what a CD-only game would be capable of, turned into one of the most successful interactive entertainment titles of all time—and one of the elite few PC games with sales in excess of one million copies.

So when designer Vince Lee, creator of *Rebel Assault*, first considered making a sequel, he knew he had his work cut out for him. "When we made the first game, we didn't set out to make a hit," says Lee. "I don't think you can plan to make a hit in this industry. What you can do is combine a strong story with fun gameplay and high production values."

"I only wanted to make *Rebel II* if I knew I could make it bigger and better than the original," continues Lee. "We've accomplished this both technically and creatively. I think gamers will appreciate how *Rebel II* really is a worthy sequel to the original."

GAMEROOM

**REBEL ASSAULT
DIRECTOR HAL
BARWOOD
EXPLAINS A
SCENE TO REBEL
ONE ACTOR
JAMISON JONES
AS GAME CRE-
ATOR, VINCE
LEE (FAR LEFT),
LOOKS ON.**



REBEL

Jump for joysticks! The sequel to Rebel Assault is about to launch

BY SUE BERKEY

It keeps the approachability and seamlessness of the first game, but has twice as much oomph, with spectacular imagery, sound and story. There's just more of everything. There are some 500 shots in the game, more than three times that of *Rebel Assault*, yet the game keeps moving and keeps the player involved."

Lee approached the creative side of the challenge by developing a brand-new *STAR WARS* story for players to experience. The game opens in the vicinity of the Dreighton Nebula, where Rookie One—the player's alter ego—is part of a Rebel scouting patrol. He's investigating disappearances of Rebel spacecraft near Dreighton, the galactic equivalent of Earth's Bermuda Triangle. Rookie One responds to a distress call coming from a ship in the nebula. Once there, he discovers an Imperial presence, which is odd because the region is not known to have any strategic value.

As the story progresses, it becomes clear that the Empire is somehow exploiting the area's history of mysterious disappearances

and is, in fact, experimenting with a new weapon with which to wipe out the Rebel Alliance. It's up to Rookie One, and the player, to uncover and foil the Empire's plot. To succeed, the player must pilot numerous *STAR WARS* craft, including an X-wing fighter, a speeder bike and a *Millennium Falcon*-class freighter, and battle an onslaught of Imperial legions.

Technically, *Rebel II* is one of the most ambitious games ever developed by LucasArts. From the new *STAR WARS* worlds built with highly sophis-



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REBEL ASSAULT II: A Test Flight.

Here's a sampling of what you'll encounter when you become Rookie One in this action-packed sequel: (A) Rookie One escapes in a *Millennium Falcon*-class freighter. (B) Rookie One engages a couple of stormtroopers in a blaster battle. (C) After targeting and firing into a cooling system inside an Imperial mining facility... (D) ...you escape just before it blows up. (E) You're buzzing through a narrow, treacherous canyon with a squadron of TIE fighters on your tail. (F) Rookie One and Ru Murleen zip along on speeder bikes. (G) The intrepid duo spies on an Imperial base. (H) Aboard a Super Star Destroyer, they disguise themselves as stormtroopers... (I) ...and then battle real stormtroopers. (J) Darth Vader doesn't take Admiral Sarn's—or anyone else's—bad news very well.



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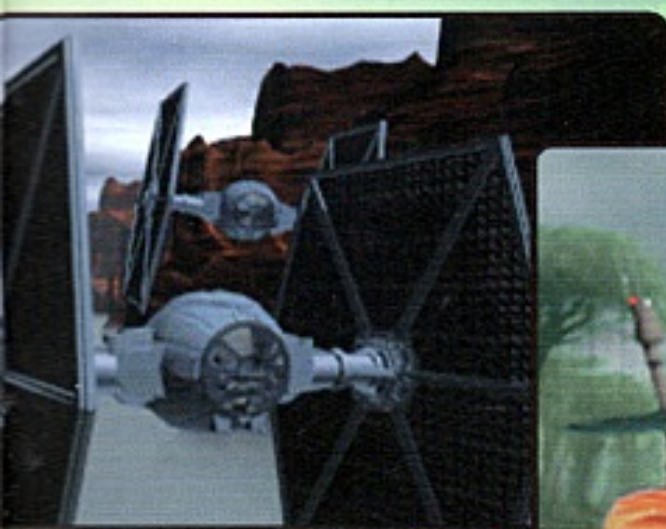


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F

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ticated 3-D computer graphics to the extensive live-action video, the game is a visual bonanza. Top that off with what may be the most impressive compositing ever seen in a game and a riveting John Williams score, and the result is interactive entertainment with production values on a par with the films we all love.

Because most of the characters in Rebel II are live-action, rather than animated, casting was an important hurdle. After many weeks of auditions, a cast of Rebels and Imperials was assembled, led by Jamison Jones as Rookie One and Julie Eccles as Rookie's friend and mentor, Ru Murleen. In addition to compelling performances by Jones and Eccles, Darth Vader himself put in several grueling days of shooting (it's not easy working under hot lights in a heavy, black capel).

A total of 34 on-camera actors were involved in the shoot, and several additional actors lent their voices to the animated characters, including Admiral Ackbar. And though they have no speaking lines, the undeniable stars of Rebel II are the original *STAR WARS* costumes, brought out of retirement especially for the shoot.

"I have a pretty firm grasp of computers," says Lee. "But I also know what I don't know, and film and video production is pretty new to me. Working on the set of the Rebel II shoot was like being transported to another world. Hal Barwood, our director, is one of the few people in this industry with a foot firmly planted in each

world. It was exhilarating to watch him work."

Like Lee, Barwood is a LucasArts designer. But whereas Lee hails from a computer programming background, Barwood spent more than 20 years making movies. Among his credits are Spielberg's *The Sugarland Express*, which he co-wrote, *Warning Sign*, which he co-wrote and directed, and *Dragonslayer*, which he co-wrote and produced.

Rebel Assault II's cast and crew took over a blue-screen stage for 10 days. One of the greatest challenges of shooting on blue screen is ensuring that the perspective in shots is correct. Because there weren't any physical sets to use as reference, Barwood skillfully guided the actors through scenes with the help of an Ultimatte video compositor. The Ultimatte combined what was being shot by the camera with rough 3-D backgrounds and objects mocked up for each of the live-action scenes by the Rebel II artists. The results were displayed on a monitor on the set and used by Barwood for blocking and lighting.

Although most the characters in the game are live actors, the majority of Rebel II's graphics are 3-D computer animation. Lead artist Richard Green directed a team of 12 artists whose job it was to bring designer Lee's vision to reality.

"Vince would say, 'We need a space station on this level and some kind of creature in this scene,' and I had to figure out what it all would look like," says Green. "All the art is a balance between what will look right in the *STAR WARS* universe, how far we can stretch our imaginations and what's technically possible."

Across the board, the Rebel II team feels privileged to be adding its own twist to the *STAR WARS* saga. "Some might consider doing a licensed

product restrictive," says Lee. "But with *STAR WARS*, that just isn't the case. The *STAR WARS* universe is so rich with its diverse characters and history that I never tire of it."

Nor do the millions of fans

all over the world who, during their patient vigil for the next three films, can arm themselves with a blaster and a PC as they experience an all-new interactive *STAR WARS* adventure. ☺

Sue Berkey is a regular contributor to SWGM.



**LEFT: AN ACTOR
IS FILMED IN
FRONT OF A
BLUE SCREEN. A
COMPUTER-AN-
IMATED BACK-
GROUND IS
ADDED TO THE
FINAL IMAGE.**

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RETAILERS: Issue #1 is scheduled
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COMICS' WHITE KNIGHT

While he's revived STAR WARS comics, Dark Horse founder Mike Richardson has also helped save the genre's creative forces

BY ANDY MANGELS

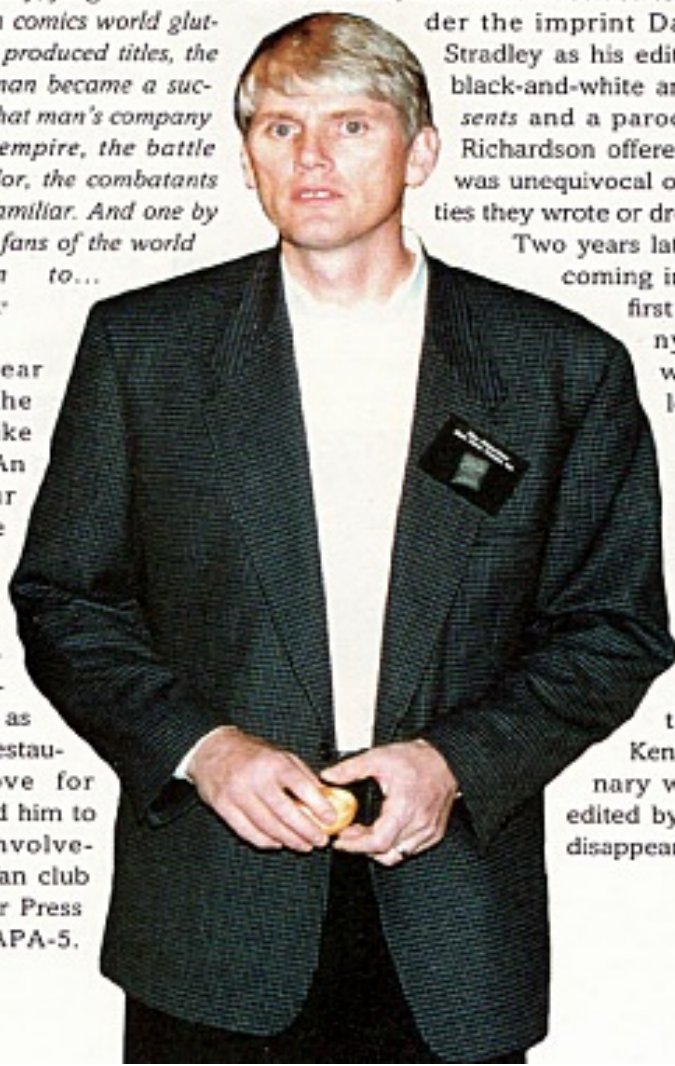
■ Nearly a decade ago, in a comic book store far, far in the suburbs, a battle was begun. It was a battle for creativity, fought in black and white. In a comics world glutted by cheaply produced titles, the vision of one man became a success. Then, as that man's company grew into an empire, the battle changed to color, the combatants became more familiar. And one by one, the comic fans of the world were drawn to... the Dark Horse.

The year was 1986, the man was Mike Richardson. An entrepreneur by nature, he owned several Pegasus Books, comics stores in Oregon and Washington, as well as a successful restaurant. His love for comics had led him to a longtime involvement with a fan club called Amateur Press Alliance, or APA-5.

Contributors to APA-5 had included such comics heavyweights as Frank Miller, Chris Warner, Paul Chadwick, Mark Verheiden, Mark Badger and Randy Stradley. That summer, with a wellspring of creative friends, Richardson decided to self-publish a line of comics under the imprint Dark Horse Comics. He hired Stradley as his editor, and the two put together a black-and-white anthology called *Dark Horse Presents* and a parody called *Boris the Bear*. What Richardson offered that many publishers did not was unequivocal ownership by creators of properties they wrote or drew.

Two years later, Dark Horse was an up-and-coming independent. Branching into its first licensing ventures, the company achieved smash successes with *Aliens* and *Predator*, and lesser success with *Godzilla*.

In 1990, following their *Light and Darkness War* series for Epic (a Marvel Comics imprint), the creative team of Tom Veitch and Cam Kennedy decided to take a whack at a *STAR WARS* revival. *STAR WARS: Dark Empire* was to have been four 64-page issues, with only the first to be painted by Kennedy. Although a lot of preliminary work was done on the series, edited by Marcus McLaurin, the project disappeared into oblivion.





into gear. In December 1991, *Dark Empire* debuted.

COMICSCAN

The series was so successful, Dark Horse rushed to put more *STAR WARS* projects together. The ever-popular R2-D2 and C-3PO teamed in several incarnations of *Droids*. Veitch and novelist Kevin J. Anderson produced numerous *Tales of the Jedi* in a series set thousands of years before *STAR WARS*. Reprints of the great daily newspaper strip from the 1970s and '80s were reformatted and repackaged as *Classic STAR WARS*. And sales of everything *STAR WARS* just kept growing.

Richardson and Lucasfilm next agreed on adapting some of Timothy Zahn's best-selling

STAR WARS novels. On a trip to France, Richardson found his creative team for the project. "I was familiar with Olivier Vatine and Fred Blanchard, who had worked with us on a graphic novel of *Aquablue*."

Literally years in the making, their adaptation (scripted by Mike Baron) of Zahn's *Heir to the Empire* will appear starting in November of this year.

Richardson also picked up the rights to another Lucasfilm property, *Indiana Jones* (and, later, *Young Indiana Jones*), and turned it into a solid series. Success, it seemed, lay in working strongly with the licensors to ensure a cohesive and high-quality product.

"The *STAR WARS* bible has become so complex that it's not as easy as simply coming up with a story and writing it any more," Richardson states. "You



By chance, Mike Richardson came to the rescue. "*STAR WARS* had always been one of my favorite films," says Richardson from Dark Horse's Milwaukie, Oregon, headquarters. "I thought *The Empire Strikes Back* was a brilliant follow-up. As a fan since the early days, the opportunity to do *STAR WARS* comics with respect and a real interest in adding to the *STAR WARS* legend—stories that built on what already was there—was an exciting prospect."

That opportunity knocked when Richardson saw sample pages of Kennedy's shelved *Dark Empire* artwork. "Lucy Wilson from Lucasfilm had contacted me to see if I was interested in taking the project over from Marvel, which wasn't treating it as a first-class property," Richardson, 42, recalls. "We wanted to really give the *STAR WARS* license a first-class treatment with first-class artists." Richardson's answer was yes, and thus the project was kicked back

EMPIRE'S END
#1 FEATURES A
COVER BY DAVE
DORMAN AND
INTERIOR ART
BY JIM BAIKIE.
THE STORY IS
WRITTEN BY
TOM VEITCH.



have to make sure it fits in with all the continuity that exists, which has expanded considerably since we took over the license. It's always exciting to add our own section of the *STAR WARS* epic."

And just how does Dark Horse fit into the saga's continuity? "We have guidelines from Lucasfilm that define what we can and cannot do," explains Richardson. "We also have specific time periods assigned. To break outside them, George Lucas has to decide if he wants to make exceptions. He's concerned

with whether or not it could interfere with what he's creating for the future."

As with the *Tales of the Jedi* series, Lucas "has made exceptions," Richardson adds, "but generally there's so much material available in the time periods we're given that we can go in and find characters and elements of the series that fans are aware of but that have never been exploited. We go in and do our take on the story and submit it to Lucasfilm. They either approve, make suggestions or reject. In our case, they're very supportive of what we're doing."

Even with the wrap-up to *Dark Empire* and *Dark Empire II* coming in this fall's *Empire's End*, Dark Horse isn't through with long-form stories. "We're coming up with some new epic story lines," Richardson reports. "Randy Stradley, editor Ryder Windham and I are developing a story about what happened to the Imperial Royal Guard after the death of the Emperor."

Other special projects are on the way. From September through December, Dark Horse is doing a *STAR WARS* promotion on boxes of Kellogg's Apple Jacks. An exclusive *Droids* comic on the back will entice buyers to a special-edition *X-Wing* comic book. "This is going

DARK HORSE HAS COME A LONG WAY SINCE BORIS THE BEAR, LARGELY DUE TO STAR WARS. BELOW (FROM LEFT) ARE COVERS FROM UPCOMING TITLES: CLASSIC STAR WARS BY AL WILLIAMSON; HEIR TO THE EMPIRE #1 BY MATHIEU LAUF-FRAY; BOBA FETT BY CAM KENNEDY; AND THE SITH WAR BY HUGH FLEMING.

to be on 13 million cereal boxes," Richardson reports. "It's part of what we call our outreach program. We're looking for different ways to get people to pay attention to comics shops and the comics industry. All of the boxes will say, '*STAR WARS* comics are available at your local comics shops. Look in your Yellow Pages under Comics.'"

In 1996, a major new *STAR WARS* event—*Shadows of the Empire*—will tie in many of Lucasfilm's licensees, including Dark Horse. In addition to a six-issue mini-series, the company will create a companion pop-up comic. "*Shadows* will lead in to the excitement for the next movie trilogy," says Richardson.

A few years ago, Dark Horse produced an illustrated hardcover novel by Steve Bissette and Dave Dorman called *Alien: Tribes*. "We're doing the same thing with *STAR WARS* in conjunction with Berkley. It will be name talent working on graphic story albums, in the same format as *Tribes*. Berkley will be distributing the series in bookstores, and we'll distribute to the



direct-sales market." Several original graphic novels also are in discussion.

Richardson is as enthusiastic today about *STAR WARS* as he was when the original film came out. "At Dark Horse, we're having a lot of fun with *STAR WARS*."



The excitement is building. *STAR WARS* will own this country in 1998, and we're thrilled to be going forward and building excitement with our projects." ☺

Andy Mangels, a frequent contributor to *SWGM*, is the author of *Star Wars: The Essential Guide to Characters*, just published by Del Rey Books.

BRIGHT STAR WARS FUTURE FOR DARK HORSE

UPCOMING COMICS PROJECTS

Tales of the Jedi: The Sith War, #1-6

Droids: Season of Revolt, #5-8

Heir to the Empire, #1-6

Empire's End, #1-2

X-Wing R.S.: The Phantom Affair, #1-4

Boba Fett: Bounty on Bar-Kooda Special

Splinter of the Mind's Eye, #1-4

Tales of the Mos Eisley Cantina Special

Jabba the Hutt Special #4

X-Wing: Rogue Squadron Vol. III, #1-4

Shadows of the Empire, #1-6

Kevin J. Anderson/Dario Carrasco/Jordi Ensign (Aug.)

Ian Strnad/Bill Hughes/Keith Williams (Sept.)

Mike Baron/Olivier Vatine/Fred Blanchard (Oct.)

Tom Veitch/Jim Baikie (Oct.)

Mike Stackpole/Darko Macan/Edvin Biukovic (Nov.)

John Wagner/Cam Kennedy (Dec.)

Terry Austin/Chris Sprouse (Dec.)

Bruce Jones/Bret Blevins (Jan. 1996)

Jim Woodring/Art Wetherell/Monty Sheldon (Feb.)

[writers, artists TBA] (March)

John Wagner/Kilian Plunkett (May)

SPECIAL PROJECTS

X-Wing Apple Jacks Comic

Droids Apple Jacks Comic Box Back

Boba Fett serial in STAR WARS

GALAXY MAGAZINE, Issues #5-8)

Battle of the Bounty Hunters Pop-Up

Ryder Windham/John Nadeau/Monty Sheldon (Sept.)

Ryder Windham/Ian Gibson (Sept.)

Andy Mangels/John Nadeau/Jordi Ensign (Oct.)

Ryder Windham/Chris Moeller (Summer '96)

TRADE PAPERBACKS

Classic Movie Adaptation (Oct.)

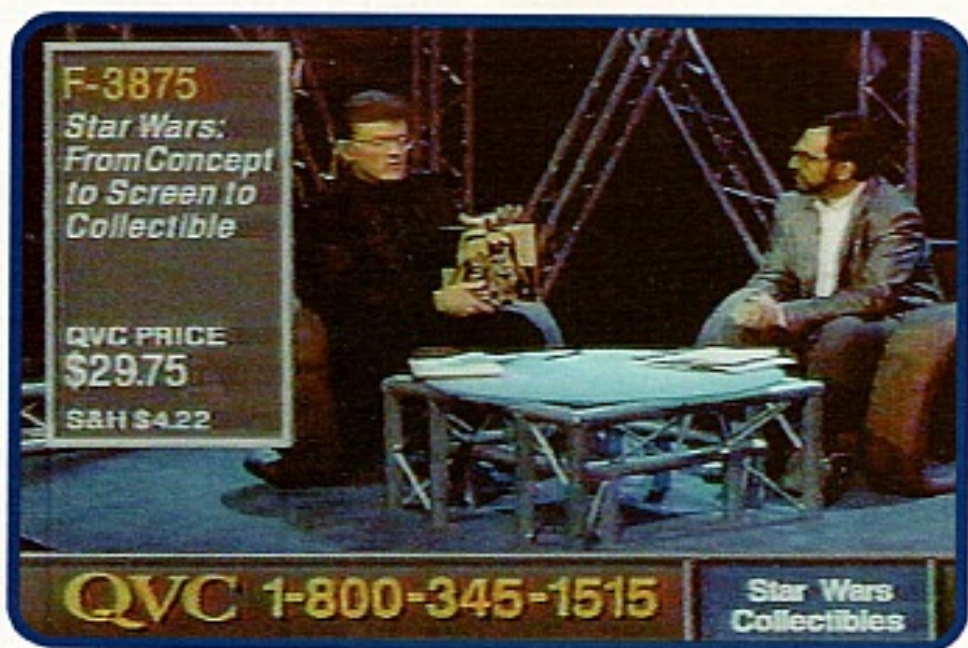
Classic Movie Adaptation Boxed Set (Oct.)

Classic STAR WARS, Volume 3: *Escape to Hoth* (Dec.)

Tales of the Jedi: Dark Lords of the Sith (Jan. 1996)



...As in QUARRREN, VADER, CORELLIAN?



*QVC means many things to home shoppers,
but to STAR WARS fans, it's the
collectibles channel*

BY STEVE SANSWEET

It wasn't too long ago that "home shopping" meant phoning the neighborhood drug-store or grocer and requesting a few items for delivery. For others, it was ordering Christmas gifts from the Sears catalog. Alas, mom-and-pop stores have given way to supermarkets and Wal-Mart, and Sears has hung up its catalog business. Still, home shopping, of a very different nature, is a multi-billion-dollar business—and *STAR WARS* collectibles are playing a small but expanding part in its growth.

Three years ago, on October 28, 1992, QVC, the cable TV shopping network (the initials actually stand for Quality, Value, Choice), aired its first two-hour *STAR WARS* special, hosted by Steve Bryant and special guest Mark Hamill. The show, which aired live at 10 p.m. from QVC headquarters in the Philadelphia suburb of West Chester, didn't get a lot of advance notice, but it did attract plenty of viewers—and buyers.

"Were you one of the hundreds of thousands of people who waited in line back in May of 1977?" asked host Bryant as he greeted viewers. The set around him wasn't much to look at: heavy gray curtains piled in artsy heaps, three giant photos from *STAR WARS* and directors' chairs embroidered with "Steve" and "Mark."

In keeping with the QVC format, Bryant began by previewing a number of items, letting die-hard collectors order their "must-haves" before they possibly sold out. My favorite item, by the way, not only was left out of the preview, but was the last item shown. More on that later.

Included in the preview were the letterboxed videocassettes of the *STAR WARS* trilogy (plus one *Making of...* special) at \$99.95; Darth Vader and Yoda hologram watches at \$35.50 each; the "one-time-only" boxed hardcover, three-volume reprint of the *STAR WARS* daily comic

strips for \$135 (marked down from the \$150 that I had paid!); an unautographed photo plaque of R2-D2 and C-3PO at \$67; an autographed Mark Hamill *Return of the Jedi* plaque for \$91.50; a Michael Whelan Yoda lithograph for \$135; remakes of Artoo and Threepio pendants at \$14.50 each; and Chewbacca or Yoda ceramic banks by Sigma at \$30.75 each. (The latter got Bryant into trouble when he kept saying that the pieces were "a warehouse find—made in 1977!" In fact, they were made after the release of *Empire*; Bryant later corrected himself.)

Hamill, when he wasn't spinning yarns about starring in the films, showed genuine interest in a number of the collectibles. The hologram watches sold out first (QVC only takes orders for the exact number of items it has in stock, prepackaged and ready to ship within hours). That was right after the modeling of the "exclusive" black *STAR WARS* 15th anniversary sweatshirt and the introduction of a \$26.25 poster of Melanie Taylor Kent's \$1,800 *STAR WARS* serigraph.

The next item jolted me out of my easy chair. It was the hard-cover version of my then brand-new book, *STAR WARS: From Concept to Screen to Collectible*. "It's a must-have!" Bryant enthused. "I devoured this book!" I was so giddy I almost immediately forgave the host for never mentioning the author's name. Regardless, the book sold out.

Still to come were a Yoda ceramic mug at \$26.25; a collection of five *STAR WARS* pins for \$17; a West End Games roleplaying game book at \$26.25; and, at \$39.75, another book, *George Lucas: The Creative Impulse*.

Then Bryant introduced an item that will go down in *STAR WARS* collectibles history—or infamy: the *STAR WARS* plastic film tie and suspender set, for just \$36.25. Yes, made to look like actual film with scenes from all three movies, this QVC exclusive came with pants clips on the suspenders and a pre-made knot in the skinny tie. "This has to be one of the more unusual collectibles we've ever offered," the host said. I couldn't resist—and picked up the phone. (Did anyone else out there buy a set?) They still don't top my Darth Vader black velvet painting from Tijuana, but at least the tie and suspenders were licensed and authorized.

They also were aberrations, for nothing has since come close to their level of tackiness. That's because for everything you see on the now quarterly two-hour specials (and follow-up shows), there's a lot of work behind

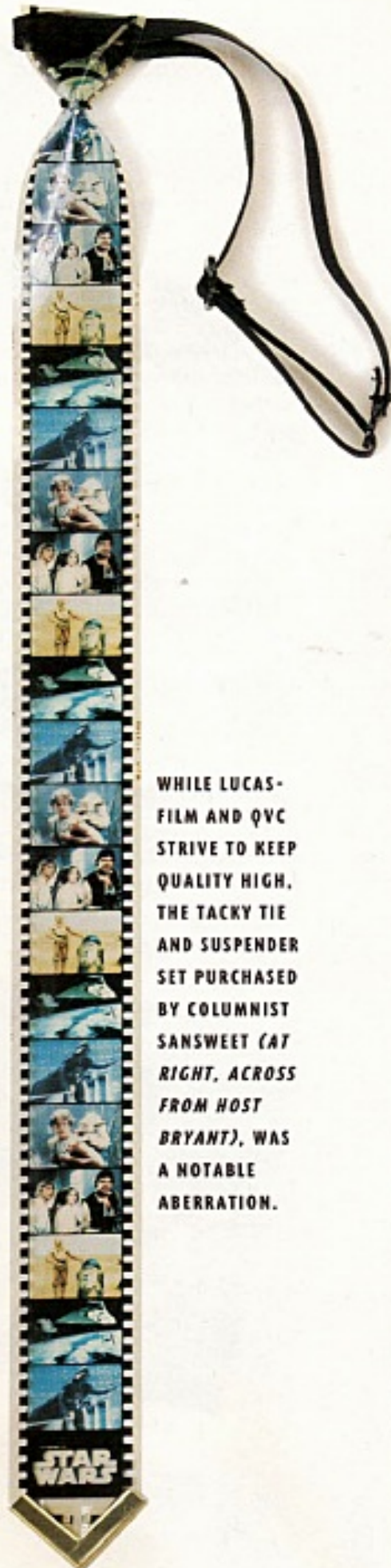
GALACTIC BAZAAR

these shows together. [Editor's note: Although Steve now co-hosts a number of QVC's *STAR WARS* specials, he has no financial stake in them, so don't view this column as self-promotion. *SWGM* specifically assigned this story.]

Actually, the shows are packaged not by QVC or Lucasfilm, but by The Scoreboard, a Cherry Hill, N.J., company that specializes in sports and entertainment collectibles, especially items autographed by famous sports stars and other celebrities. Scoreboard is licensed by Lucasfilm to sell *STAR WARS* memorabilia via electronic retailing, and it in turn has selected QVC as its official *STAR WARS* electronic retailer. That doesn't mean you'll never find an occasional piece of *STAR WARS* merchandise on another home-shopping show, but you won't find any other all-*STAR WARS* show.

Two individuals are primarily responsible for what appears on the shows: Ann Teasdale, director of marketing, sports and entertainment memorabilia for Scoreboard; and Julia Russo, Lucasfilm's director of merchandising. While they both do their utmost to maintain the high quality of items offered, Teasdale teasingly points out that she arrived at Scoreboard shortly after that first *STAR WARS* show and thus politely declines responsibility for the "film clip" tie and suspender set; Russo just rolls her eyes and chalks it up to a learning experience.

"In the beginning, it was a bit of a crap shoot, trying to figure out what the fans really wanted and what the price-level tolerance was," Russo says. "When *STAR WARS* first came out, licensing was in its infancy and a lot of the merchandise we



WHILE LUCAS-FILM AND QVC STRIVE TO KEEP QUALITY HIGH, THE TACKY TIE AND SUSPENDER SET PURCHASED BY COLUMNIST SANSWEET (AT RIGHT, ACROSS FROM HOST BRYANT), WAS A NOTABLE ABERRATION.

see today just didn't exist. Now the fan base is older and, in addition to the mass-market toys and other merchandise, they want quality items."

The issue of pricing is one that Lucasfilm takes seriously. They don't want to get too pricey, but they also want to offer true value for high-quality items. "We originally thought the price of Illusive Originals' Yoda reproduction [featured on a show last year] was going to be substantially lower than the \$400 or so they had to charge because of the work that went into it," Russo says. "We're walking on eggshells with prices like that; we don't want to hurt the collector. But the Yoda is selling very well because it is perceived to be worth the price."

Russo and Teasdale regularly talk to each other about new licensees and products that might work for an upcoming special. "We want to have something exclusive or to introduce it on one of our shows," Teasdale says. "We want *STAR WARS* fans to expect to find new and unique items."

On the show last August, 3,000 sets of two uncut sheets from Topps' *The Empire Strikes Back*



SCOREBOARD DEVELOPS SOME OF ITS OWN *STAR WARS* MERCHANDISE, INCLUDING THIS 24K GOLD-FOIL TRADING CARD OF DARTH VADER.

SCOREBOARD'S CERAMIC TRADING CARDS FEATURE POSTER ART FROM THE TRILOGY.

Widevision cards at \$39 sold out. Such sheets are rare (these were even marked "Not to be sold" and had to have a letter of authorization accompany them) and often bring \$100 or so each.

One of the most consistently popular items are special editions of Dark Horse *STAR WARS* comics. The first, the set of six *Dark Empire* books with a gold-embossed cover, blew out at less than \$60. Within weeks, individual books were fetching that much at retail.

Scoreboard buys the merchandise (or arranges to have it made) from other Lucasfilm licensees, resells it to QVC—which retains the right to return unsold stock—and pays a royalty to Lucasfilm. Almost as important to QVC as the revenue from the 15-18 items offered on each show is the number of first-time buyers who can be added to the QVC database. For the August show it was a particularly impressive 1,900. Revenues also were a record, topping the previous best show by about 12%.

(QVC doesn't disclose actual revenue figures, but I calculate that a really "hot" show can bring in well over \$150,000 each hour.)

So why didn't that August show in-





#3300 - YODA \$59.95



#3700 - CHEWBACCA \$67.95



#3200 - DARTH VADER \$64.95



#3500 - C-3PO \$64.95



#3400 - HAN SOLO \$64.95

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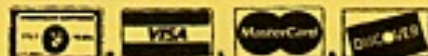
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clude the much-ballyhooed new Kenner action figures that were just starting to ship at that time? "Toy retailers work on an average 13% markup, but that isn't feasible for us because of the costs to put on a show like ours," Teasdale says. "Also, we have to have product wrapped and ready for shipping at QVC's warehouses two weeks before

with images of posters from the trilogy (about \$60, including a smoked Lucite base and pewter logo). Another popular item has been autographed plaques of *STAR WARS* actors—particularly Mark Hamill, who's been featured on four different ones—all of which sell for under \$100. (For comparison, a New York record store sells a black-and-white autographed photo of Luke Skywalker's alter ego, unframed, for \$125.)

Scoreboard gives Hamill approval rights on his photos, a policy that can get tricky. For one plaque, Scoreboard had picked and printed 1,000 copies of a photo of Luke in a tan uniform that Hamill really didn't like. "He asked, 'Is there any way I can sign something

else?'" Teasdale recalls. "We jump through hoops to try to accommodate our celebrities, so we quickly dug out a negative of a photo he preferred, printed it overnight, sent it by air counter-to-counter, had Mark autograph them and immediately ship them back, put them on plaques, then packaged, weighed and delivered them to the QVC warehouse—all in about 24 hours."

For the gold cards, Teasdale and Russo discuss possible key images, then a supplier digitizes the selected ones and prepares black-and-white sketches. Many images are rejected at that point, Teasdale says, because they really don't work without color. The final image is then sculpted into a plate by a master artisan, a prototype is produced—and Teasdale holds her breath while quality-conscious Russo decides if it passes muster or needs to be tweaked in any number of ways. "No detail is too small," Russo says. "The integrity of the license is very important to us."

For the future, both Teasdale and Russo see the frequency of the QVC *STAR WARS* collectibles shows increasing, more exclusive merchandise being offered and more guest appearances by actors, artists and writers from the *STAR WARS* galaxy. "We're really building—nearly every show has surpassed the preceding one," Teasdale says. And that's despite the absence of tacky tie-and-suspenders sets! ☺

Super-collector Steve Sansweet is a regular contributor to SWGM.



each show, and there wasn't any way to accurately predict when the figures would hit." Still, she hopes eventually to do a deal for some Kenner exclusives.

Other merchandise is developed in-house at Scoreboard, some of it related to the sports products the company sells. There have been two 24K gold-foil trading cards—one of Darth Vader and a second of the *Millennium Falcon* and the Death Star (\$30 each). Scoreboard also did a limited edition of three ceramic trading cards

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3 SECOND PRIZES Limited-edition collectible film frame from *Star Wars: A New Hope*, courtesy of Willitts Designs (see page 14)

19 THIRD PRIZES Retail box of *Star Wars* Galaxy Series 3 trading cards, courtesy of Topps (see page 11)

Entries must be received by **January 31, 1996**. One entry per person. Answers will appear in Issue #7. Winners will be notified by mail. Photocopies or handwritten copies of this contest are acceptable.

Name _____ Birth Date _____

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MAIL YOUR ENTRY TO: Contest #5, *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*,
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Traveling from planet to planet in the *STAR WARS* galaxy might seem easy—when you're watching the movies or reading the books. But when you consider the "reality" of Star Destroyers, Blockade Runners and other vehicles, interplanetary transportation can be a daunting task. So, too, can answering these questions related the spaceships of *STAR WARS*. Do it correctly, though, unscramble the circled letters (hint: it's what keeps breaking down on the *Millennium Falcon*) and mail us all the answers—and we'll enter you in a random drawing to win great *STAR WARS* prizes.

- 1) This Imperial Star Destroyer was temporarily incapacitated during the Battle of Hoth.
- 2) The very first type of ship seen in *STAR WARS: A New Hope*.
- 3) Originally an Imperial vessel, Luke was treated aboard this class of ship after Vader severed his hand.
- 4) Darth Vader's personal flagship, *Executor*, was destroyed during the Battle of...
- 5) The space freighter to which Biggs Darklighter was first assigned.
- 6) The common name for the Incom T-65 starfighter.
- 7) Emperor Palpatine traveled in this class of three-winged shuttle.
- 8) This Headquarters Frigate was the Alliance's command ship during the Battle of Endor.
- 9) This Alliance star cruiser was vaporized by the second Death Star.
- 10) The oldest class of Star Destroyer.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

B O N U S A N S W E R

ANSWERS TO "All-Alien Trivia Quiz" in Issue #3: 1) Hermi Odle; 2) Pote Snitkin; 3) dewback; 4) Yak Face; 5) Beedo; 6) Oola; 7) Jundland Wastes; 8) Nien Nunb; 9) krayt dragons; 10) Wookiees. Bonus Answer: bonegnawer

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